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Iraq

One person was injured when a car blew up in a Baghdad hotel parking lot, INA reported. The prime minister told journalists that U.S. aggression against the country was still continuing, the agency disclosed. The trade minister accused the U.S. Navy of impounding a ship carrying sugar, noting that such shipments are not forbidden by the UN sanctions, Paris Radio Monte Carlo reported. The Foreign Ministry released separate statements, both reported by Baghdad radio, on Iran's responsibility for the Gulf war and on recent remarks by the Iranian defense minister.

Iran

A Foreign Ministry official termed Switzerland's closure of its embassy in Tehran "a hasty decision," Tehran television reported, adding that a Swiss Embassy employee missed his flight "because he neglected to present his passport in time." The Iraqi charge d'affaires was summoned to hear a protest against recent attacks in Baghdad against Iranian diplomats, Tehran radio disclosed. Meanwhile, the Saudi charge d'affaires was summoned for a protest against the publication of books that insult Islam, IRNA reported.

Israel

Shamir ordered Likud Knesset members to vote against the bill for direct election of the prime minister, Tel Aviv radio reported, citing him as saying that "the Likud must win, and it does not matter how we do it." In the wake of controversial remarks by the Air Force commander, a YEDI'OT AHARONOT article examined tensions between IDF generals and political decision-makers. An immigration official denied BOSTON GLOBE reports about an imminent airlift of Soviet Jews, Jerusalem radio disclosed.

Lebanon

The country will not attend the Moscow phase of Arab-Israeli peace talks "unless Israel pledges to withdraw from the south and release all the detainees held in Israeli prisons," the trade minister told Voice of Lebanon. The Lebanese chief negotiator, meanwhile, told Beirut radio that the next phase of talks with Israel would begin on 8 January in Washington.

Jordan

King Husayn received the Iranian deputy president for parliamentary affairs, Amman television reported. The Lower House approved the state budget, Amman radio disclosed.

Palestinian Affairs

Yasir 'Arafat's New Year greeting to Boris Yeltsin was reported by Algiers Voice of Palestine.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Telegrams Yeltsin on Recognition

LD3012191691 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, yesterday sent a telegram to Boris Yeltsin, president of the Russian Federation Republic, containing the state of Palestine's recognition of the Russian Federation Republic. In his telegram, the brother leader President Abu-'Ammar congratulated the Russian president on the new year, stressing on this occasion the importance of Russia's role in the Middle East peace process, and the desire of the people of Palestine and the state of Palestine to continue cooperation with the state of Russia in all fields.

Increase in Preparation Urged for Next Talks

LD2712111991 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Brothers: The Washington talks, which began in such a staggering way, ended without any apparent progress. The Palestinian delegation returned without a media uproar or welcome demonstrations, despite the fact that the achievements in Washington are more important in practical terms than those in Madrid. We did not expect easy talks in Washington at all. We did not dream of quick results. We were aware of the aim of the Israeli strategy aimed at reducing the Palestinian role as an independent side from the point of view of Israel's nonrecognition of national and political Palestinian rights.

Based on this, it is a mistake to think that the corridor talks in Washington were a Palestinian failure. On the contrary, these talks constituted an official principled debate for the first time about a very important issue in the Arab-Israeli conflict—the Palestinian identity and dealing with it in a considered and independent way. The Palestinian attachment to its stand regarding the refusal to enter the negotiations hall under the Israeli conditions is an achievement in itself. The Palestinians have shown to the world their will for peace and their continuous efforts to achieve peace. They have proved to all the parties in the talks and those chairing them that the world, especially Israel and the United States, must not expect them to negotiate about their national identity.

The disappointment felt by some Palestinians regarding the results of the Washington talks is basically due to the optimistic assessments about the results of the opening of the peace conference in Madrid, and the exaggeration in the information gains the Palestinians thought they achieved, which made some of them think that their statehood was so close. This was a mistake shared by some members of the delegation and some parties that chose not to bide their time reading into the results in a realistic way.

Each round of talks requires more study and assessment of the weak and strong points and the reshuffling of cards. While awaiting the beginning of the second round of the Washington talks on 7 January, we hope that the Palestinian delegation will have enough time to assess their performance and results and to raise the level of preparations for the next phase.

On the occasion of Christmas, we join them in praying for the embodiment of the Christmas message, which is a message of love, peace, and justice for all peoples, including the Palestinian people.

Al-Husayni Clarifies Desire To Talk With Likud

TA2712135691 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic 25 Dec 91 pp 1, 11

[Excerpt] Jerusalem—Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Palestinian team at the peace conference, yesterday refuted reports by the Israeli news media about his readiness to hold talks with the Likud. He pointed out that he is ready to hold contacts with all influential political forces in Israel, including elements of the Likud. He added that he is talking about mere contacts, not negotiations, which would have no connection at all with the current negotiations in Washington, because those negotiations have their own rules. He said he is not authorized to discuss the negotiations in press interviews.

Al-Husayni added: For a long time now we have been holding general contacts with influential forces in Israeli society, and our contacts are not limited to the peace movements only. We also maintain contact with the Labor Party. We have no idea of boycotting any influential political force in the Israeli arena. [passage omitted]

Reassessment of Peace Talks Strategies Urged

TA2412172091 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 20 Dec 91 p 9

[Editorial: "Between Madrid and Washington—Mere Retreat"]

[Text] It seems that the optimism prevailing at the opening meetings of the peace conference in Madrid has evaporated with the conclusion of the Washington talks and the departure of the negotiating delegations from the U.S. capital without making any progress toward peace. Things have remained the same, and may even have deteriorated, more than one and a half months after the Madrid conference.

The Palestinians today feel more frustrated and bitter than any other party in the conflict. They see Israel adhering to its rejectionist positions, while the world is

preoccupied with events in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, and while the Arab world is looking at events in the occupied territories as a spectator.

Whereas the Palestinians welcomed the convocation of the peace conference and made every possible concession, stemming from the sincere desire to make a real, just, and comprehensive peace that would begin a new era in the region, they soon found Israel unwilling to deal with them as a party on equal footing with the other parties in the peace process. Israel continued to adhere to its positions rejecting the implementation of international legitimacy, refused to halt or suspend settlement activity in the occupied territories, and interpreted "self-government" in the interim stage—affirmed by the invitations to the Madrid conference—to be limited "autonomy" that does not include the land. Whereas the letters of invitation to the conference referred to a Palestinian-Israeli track in the peace process, Israel insisted on minimizing the Palestinian problem and refused to acknowledge that track. All this occurred within sight and sound of the United States of America, one of the cosponsors of the peace conference, while the other sponsor ceased to exist.

Whereas the Palestinians expressed their optimism about advancing toward peace by raising olive branches during the convocation of the conference and at the delegation's return from Madrid, they now see, with the approaching return of the Palestinian delegation from Washington, that the blessed trees from which the olive branches were cut to express the desire for peace have been uprooted and thrown into the middle of the road.

The feelings of bitterness and frustration prevailing today in the Palestinian street have their justifications, foremost of which is the deteriorating situation in various spheres in the occupied territories, including the fact that what is happening on the ground is completely different from the talk about peace.

The Palestinian side today has the right to query the seriousness of the U.S. position in the peace process, as well as the seriousness of the guarantees and obligations it offered to the Palestinian side to persuade it to take part in the Madrid conference. Where is that active and effective role in the peace process? Washington remains silent and watches Israel adhere to its rejectionist positions. It watches the changes in the occupied territories without any intervention to halt the regression or to encourage progress. All that interested Washington was the repeal of the UN resolution on Zionism, or the situation in Ukraine and the other Soviet republics.

Has the time not come for the Arab world to realize that it should be the master of its own destiny, that waiting for salvation from the United States could go on for years without any result, and that real Arab interests hinge on a clear and decisive Arab decision that deals with all international powers on the basis of their practical convergence or divergence with international legitimacy and Arab rights acknowledged by this legitimacy?

There is now a real opportunity for the Palestinian and Arab sides to reassess their strategies toward the peace process and, in doing so, to reassess the guarantees and commitments provided by the United States.

OPEC Affairs

Algeria Wants Emergency Meeting on Falling Prices

LD2812090991 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] At Algeria's request, OPEC may hold an emergency meeting in January if oil prices continue to fall. According to the Indonesian minister of mining and energy, the price per barrel today is less than $17. The price has gone down more than $5 recently.

Algeria

Official First Round Election Results Noted

LD3012192091 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Excerpts] We review the results of the first round of the legislative elections, announced officially by the Constitutional Council this evening.

[Begin unidentified council chairman recording] [passage omitted]
Number of registered electors: 13,258,554.
Number of voters: 7,822,625; that is, 59 percent of those registered.
Number of those who abstained from voting: 5,435,929 citizens; that is, 41 percent of those registered.
Number of valid votes: 6,897,719; that is, 88 percent of votes cast.
Number of invalid votes: 924,906; that is, 11.82 percent of votes cast.
Number of seats in the first round: 231, distributed to winners in winning order:

1. The Islamic Salvation Front [FIS]: 188 seats. Number of votes obtained: 3,260,222.
2. The Socialist Forces Front: 25 seats. Number of votes obtained: 510,661.
3. The National Liberation Front: 15 seats. Number of votes obtained: 1,612,947
4. Independent candidates: 3 seats. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Hachani on Coexistence, Changing Constitution

LD3012113691 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] The Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] continues its efforts to dispel the fears that appeared following its victory in the first round of these elections. Abdelkader Hachani [chairman of the FIS Provisional Executive Bureau] said today that he will respect the Constitution and work within its framework and dismissed the possibility of entering an open confrontation with the Republic's president or the National People's Army.

Abdelkader Hachani called on all dynamic forces to stand shoulder to shoulder to bring the country out of the present crisis, pointing out that this year will be the end of the disasters to the Algerian people. Abdelkader Hachani said he completely ruled out the idea of his party's failing to get an overwhelming majority in the second round of the elections. He pointed out that if his party loses some constituencies because of appeals submitted by some parties, his party would restore them in the second round.

Hachani told a news conference that he pledged to respect international conventions already signed by Algeria, pointing out that Algeria could not live isolated from the world. On the possibility of confrontation with the Army, Hachani said that the Army's job constitutionally is to protect the people's opinion and that we say that if we take power through elections, the Army would be required to respect the people's opinion and to defend it.

On the likelihood of coexistence with President Chadli and of abandoning the call for early presidential elections, Hachani said:

[Begin Hachani recording] [Words indistinct] is that the process of change is serious. We entered the municipalities and were stripped of our powers by [word indistinct]. Our fear is that our entering parliament will cause the Presidency to cancel parliamentary powers, which is why we demanded early presidential elections. If there are true guarantees forcefully and realistically securing that parliament and the government will not be stripped of its powers, in fact even allowing them to implement their program, we say that the Consultative [echoura] Council could examine the issue. As a matter of principle, we have accepted change within a certain methodology. There is no harm in forwarding the matter to the Consultative Council, providing that the process of change we live in today, after the Algerian people chose the FIS with all its strength, is not emptied of its content as the municipalities were. [end recording]

On the likelihood of demands for changing the Constitution, Hachani said:

[Begin Hachani recording] Even if not all Algerians call for changing the Constitution, the Constitution itself demands to be changed. We change it constitutionally; in other words, by respecting the constitution, if a people's demand is... [changes thought] For example, the issue of early presidential elections is the people's demand today. Furthermore, it is a promise by the Republic's president himself. Do you agree with this or not? You journalists, do you agree that that is a promise on the part of the Republic's president? Recordings are available. Then that is the demand of the political scene and a promise by the Republic's president. Nevertheless, we said the problem is one of powers. It remains that the Constitution... [changes thought] I said when we made a deposition of the file, that was a clear statement that... [changes thought] Thanks to God, I challenge anyone to say that the FIS practice is outside this framework. Indeed, I say that those who laid down the Constitution were themselves characterized by violation of its sanctity. This is why I say that, as a political party, we will work within the framework of the Constitution, which empowers us to review it should that be the people's demand. That is an article in the Constitution. The Constitution has been reviewed several times in Algeria. [end recording]

FIS Issues Call To Ignore Provocations

LD3112091691 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 31 Dec 91

[Text] The Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] has called on the people to ignore provocations and to prepare to enter

the coming stage and to mobilize all loyal forces to meet the cultural challenge which everyone must face.

In a statement yesterday evening, the FIS called on the Algerian people to fraternize with each other and to cast away all feelings of hatred and rancor and to work in accordance with the teachings of Islam as brought by the Prophet, God's prayers and peace be upon him, to block the path of enemies who rally together seeking to weaken the FIS and achieve their ends, as the statement put it.

Press Reaction to Election Results Cited

LD2812234491 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Excerpt] The results of the first round of the legislative elections in Algeria continue to make the news nationally and internationally. The national and international press has devoted its headlines and editorials to this event, which has entered history. Here is a report by Abdelkader Hirch on what has been written nationally and internationally:

[Hirch] The daily AL-SALAM carries the headline: "The FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] in the Vanguard." AL-SALAM writes: In the first round of the legislative elections, Islamism progresses, liberation stumbles, and socialism is stricken by calamity.

In its "Peace Greetings" editorial, under the heading "Victory of Openness," AL-SALAM writes: The preliminary results of the first round of the legislative elections, contrary to many predictions, have confirmed the results of the local elections on 12 June 1990.

AL-SALAM adds that the vengeful round between the FIS and the National Liberation Front [FLN] has demonstrated that by virtue of its second victory, the FIS has become a great popular movement and not just a chimera that changes its appearance as the atmosphere and winds change.

For its part, AL-SHA'B writes: The first test of democracy in Algeria awaits the second round. FLN is in second place after the FIS. In its editorial "Who is the Victor?", AL-SHA'B says: Those who were counting on the Algerian people's failure in the 26 December tests will not find enough justifications now to slander the maturity and awareness of these people. It goes on to say that many democratic parties are invited to leave the political arena and to pack up their bags at the earliest date. The FIS was able to reap 40 percent of the seats in the first round because of the way it mobilized its strength, its desire for change, and its desire for the establishment of an Islamic state.

Under the headline "Democracy—The Victory of the Islamic Front in the First Round" AL-WATAN declares: If the the result of the first round did not take FIS leaders and activists by surprise, it shook the political scene in the country. It also reflects a de facto political stance by Algerians who wish to change the unilateral march mode.

LE MATIN states: The first round of legislative elections—many abstentions, the rise of the FIS, a setback for the FLN, and the emergence of the Socialist Forces Front. The future lies in the second round.

QUOTIDIEN D'ALGERIE says: An earthquake, and continues: For the first time the Algerian stands in line, not to buy oil or sugar, but to draw a small mark in a new square which constitutes the beginning of the end of 30 years of failure.

Commentary Assesses FIS Election Victory

LD3012140291 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Commentary by Barhoum Boudjemaa]

[Text] We believe that all likelihoods were considered possible from the start in the eyes of those who imagined that the election results could be balanced and shared by several parties, with the exception of one likelihood which they failed to consider, namely that the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] could win the largest number of seats in the first round. Such a naive consideration, false imagination, and miscalculations made it difficult for some to accept this result, which hit them like lightning. Thus, they became enraged and began to point accusing fingers at this or that side without taking time to think or examine the reasons and causes for such a result. If we were to think back, we would find that the way almost all the political parties pursued in dealing with the facts of reality was, in our opinion, one of the principal reasons for giving national public opinion a bad impression of these parties, thereby causing it to feel aversion toward them and to move closer to the FIS, being the strongest opposition side in the equation since it stood alone in the darkest times, enjoying no support from any party, particularly following the June events.

Furthermore, there are numerous other factors which enabled the FIS to sweep the political arena unchallenged and win the support, sympathy, and trust of the popular masses. One of these factors was the adoption of the method of simple and direct address and its concentration, in particular, on the more deprived sections of society, which were the most hit by the crisis, particularly the youth who found themselves placed on the margin and unable to merge or exercise any economic activity.

Another factor was the fact that the FIS program is based on radical change unlike the other Islamic currents in the national arena, which seemed to be characterized by a spirit of compromise.

Then there is the FIS understanding of the true nature and structure of Algerian society which feels great pride in its intellectual and cultural affiliation. The failure of the other parties to polarize the masses was the logical result of their misreading of that nature and structure and their misunderstanding of the methods of dealing

which fail to consider the cultural and ideological dimension of the people and, indeed, aim at alienating it and uprooting it. Hence, if these parties were to make a deep and concentrated evaluation of the methods and ways they pursued in dealing with the Algerian reality, they would have reached the conclusion that the loss they suffered in the legislative elections was both expected and natural.

As for the National Liberation Front [FLN], which was almost consigned this time to the dustbin of history, all that can be said is that what has happened to it was expected for many reasons which are too numerous to deal with here. However, it suffices for us to mention one basic point; namely, that embroiling the FLN, whose name has been associated with a great deal of mismanagement and the spread of corruption in all its forms, in such a battle constitutes somewhat an act of political suicide and a coup de grace to one of this country's symbols of patriotism.

Defense Ministry Denies Hachani Statement

LD2712134991 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Text] This is a communique from the Ministry of National Defense: The Ministry of National Defense unequivocally denies what Mr. Hachani, chairman of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] Executive Bureau, had said in Constantine, and which the daily newspaper AL-SALAM reported in its issue No. 349 published on 23 December, under the headline "The Guemar Incidents Are Committed by Grave Diggers." The communique says that the author of these remarks did not hesitate, for electioneering reasons, to assign to the National People's Army, and to its command, imaginary and very dangerous acts which cannot be envisaged other than by ill-intentioned people.

The Ministry of National Defense, which is bent on its responsibilities and its moral obligations, with the military institution and the victims of the Guemar painful incidents, reserves its right of legal pursuance on account of the insult against the minister of national defense, and the defamation and abuse made against this legal institution.

FIS Victory Assailed by Labor, Women's Groups

LD3112092691 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 31 Dec 91

[Text] Among the reactions from the national arena to the official announcement of the election results was a statement issued yesterday by the National Committee for the Protection of Algeria [Al-Lajnat al-Wataniyah Li Himayat al-Jaza'ir], which includes the Algerian General Workers Union and public and private employees, challenging the legality of the first round of elections.

The committee waged a campaign sharply critical of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] strugglers and the FIS itself, accusing it of rigging the elections and preparing to abolish democracy. The committee said all citizens who support democracy should participate in entrenching the democratic march in Algeria.

The Independent Society for Support of the Rights of Women, a major women's movement in Algeria, yesterday issued a statement urging the defeat of the FIS in the second round of the legislative elections on 16 January. After criticizing the FIS, it asked if 25 percent of pro-FIS voters should impose archaic laws. Finally, it called on the Algerian people not to abstain from voting, which it described as a crime against Algeria.

Egypt

Mubarak Chairs Review of Economic Reform Program

NC3112050991 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] President Husni Mubarak held an expanded meeting at the presidential office in Heliopolis this morning. The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi; Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri, deputy prime minister and minister of planning; Dr. Yusuf Wali, deputy prime minister and minister of agriculture; Sulayman Mutawalli, minister of transport and communications; Mahir Abazah, minister of electricity and energy; Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif; Dr. 'Atif 'Ubayd, minister of state for administrative development; Finance Minister Dr. Muhammad al-Razzaz; Dr. Maurice Makramallah, minister of state for international cooperation; Economy Minister Dr. Yusri Mustafa; Central Bank governor Dr. Salah Hamid; Minister of Local Administration Dr. Mahmud Sharif; Petroleum Minister Dr. Hamdi al-Banbi; and Supply Minister Jalal-al-Din Abu-al-Dhahab.

Following the two-hour meeting, Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif said that President Mubarak wanted to make a comprehensive evaluation of the year's financial and economic policies and the positive or negative results of the economic reform program. President Mubarak discussed the government's policy of promoting positive results and tackling negative results. He affirmed that the reforms that began this year have enjoyed progress and success primarily because of the policy of speaking frankly to the people and giving them the facts and the people's understanding of the economic situation and their belief that economic reform is inevitable. President Mubarak hopes that government policy on preparing the new budget will strive to achieve an acceptable balance between wages and prices and that this balance will be achieved with real resources rather than deficit spending.

President Mubarak also noted that the first fiscal year in the economic reform program was the most difficult and that the future will witness balance and stability in the market forces amid realistic prices.

President Mubarak also listened to a report on the plan for investment in various projects and services. The president requested that the government pursue a policy of controlling the size of investments and not exceed the investment volumes contained in the development plan law with regard to the administrative system represented in ministries and governorates. President Mubarak also affirmed that the funds allocated for such projects in the plan must never be exceeded without cabinet approval. The Investment Bank and the Finance Ministry, through financial controllers, will supervise expenditures with regard to the third section of the plan concerning investment in projects.

President Mubarak also affirmed that contracts must not be concluded if funds are not provided in the plan. Firms must pledge not to contract with any government or service department before securing clear approval from the Planning Ministry.

President Mubarak gave firm instructions to stop new construction and expansion. Allocations must be given to projects already under way. He noted that any violation of these instructions will cause a budget deficit.

President Mubarak also reviewed international changes and their effects on the world economy and the Egyptian economy in the short and long term. He dealt with the international situation following the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the emergence of 12 independent republics and he heard a report on the outcome of the recent cabinet decisions in this regard. He also heard a report on the visits of economists and businessmen to the former Soviet Union. He issued instructions to adopt quick measures to hold immediate political and economic contacts—with the participation of businessmen—with these republics and to support and establish channels and bridges of political, economic, and cultural work. He also gave orders for the immediate formation of an official action group and an action group of businessmen to strengthen the lines of communications. Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri, deputy prime minister and minister of planning, will be responsible for forming these groups and following up the results of their work.

Column Calls for New Constitution, Accountability

NC2412142091 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic
21 Dec 91 p 3

["Opinion" column by Dr. Muhammad 'Usfur: "A New Constitution Stressing the Head of State's Responsibility Is Needed"]

[Text] We must understand that the flood of catastrophes will not stop unless the principle of accountability is established, not only with regard to ministers but also, and primarily, to the head of state himself. While constitutional convention describes the head of state's wrongdoings as high treason (this being the same term used by the 1971 Constitution), this high treason is not the same as the crime of treason denoted by criminal law. It actually means every assault on the Constitution and the constitutional system. Legislators and jurists wanted to emphasize the enormity and hideousness of such an assault by giving it a sensational name. Al-Sadat intentionally prevented a law on presidential accountability.

In view of the government's misdeeds that are based on a totalitarian constitution, what must be done now is to draw up a new constitution the basic principle of which will be an emphatic statement on the head of state's criminal, political, and civil accountability before regular courts (not a special body) without giving him any immunity or privilege that frees him of the responsibility for his crimes or grave wrongdoings, chiefly violating the constitution or exceeding his authority. Taking the head of state and ministers to account must be facilitated so that any citizen, institution, or popular organization can put such a matter into operation and bring it before a regular court. Let the court that will try the head of state and the ministers be formed from the heads of the three highest judicial bodies: the Supreme Constitutional Court, the Higher Appeals Court, and the Supreme Administrative Court. It is my personal opinion that unless a new constitution is drawn up adopting this principle, heads of state's wrongdoings will continue to be protected. Aids of the head of state and ministers will continue to be shielded. However, the greatest danger against which we must guard is a constitutional coup d'etat that a head of state with wide-ranging authority can carry out based on constitutional provisions. This, regrettably, has been evident in the experiences and practices of the existing regime. The 1971 Constitution authorizes the head of state to impose an emergency system suspending the constitution and its guarantees (including Article 74, the declaration of a state of emergency, without specifically and clearly determining authority or safeguarding democracy and human rights). We are saying that the provisions of this Constitution have made it possible for the head of state to carry out repeated coups d'etat, which has become a method of government. This has not merely destroyed democracy and liberty, but is certainly destroying the basic makeup of the Egyptian national character. It is one aspect of the nation's external and internal collapse.

Karoui Criticizes Religious Extremism

NC2412153291 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic
20 Dec 91 p 6

[Excerpts] Tunisian Prime Minister Hamed Karoui arrives in Cairo today on a visit which will last until 23 December to attend the meetings of the joint Tunisian-Egyptian Committee for Egyptian-Tunisian cooperation and integration. On this occasion, Dr. Karoui spoke to AL-JUMHURIYAH about the steps of cooperation and integration between the two fraternal countries in various fields. [passage omitted]

Responding to a question on visas, the Tunisian prime minister said: Relations and ties between the Tunisian and Egyptian people are stronger than being affected by

the application of visa restrictions. Undoubtedly, the application of visa requirements for both countries has been dictated by complex circumstances. It is in the interest of both countries. Discussions are currently underway between Tunisian and Egyptian experts to review this policy. The exchange of visits between the interior ministers of the two countries contributed toward discussing this issue within the framework of a joint concept which takes into consideration all interlinked facts of this situation, some of which pertain to the security aspect.

Fraternal relations between Tunisia and Egypt will, in the future, witness greater support and development thanks to the directives and supervision of presidents Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and Husni Mubarak, who sincerely wish to strengthen the bridges of cooperation and integration in the benefit of the fraternal nations and their mutual interests. [passage omitted]

The Tunisian prime minister discussed mutual problems facing the two countries. He said: As long as our two countries have opted for entrenching the principles of democracy and pluralism, there is no doubt that this civilized option will be met with opposition and challenge from all those parties whose backgrounds and policies go against democracy. Therefore, some similar problems might take place in both countries in various fields, including the security aspects. These problems should be dealt with within the framework of coordination and discussion that joins us by increasing the number of visits of officials from the two countries and closely monitoring the course of events.

Our common factors of adhering to Islamic principles, rejecting petrification and rigidity, exerting concerted efforts to harmonize modernism with heritage, and elevating our two peoples' stands to make our goals common is what makes us have to bolster dialogue, coordinate stands to serve our basic issues, and confront those calling for sedition and enemies of a society, which our people have chosen, based on forgiveness, solidarity, and renunciation of violence and extremism.

It is no secret to anyone that the extremists, hiding behind a religion that does not acknowledge them, are harboring a blatant enmity to democracy and to the pillars of civil society. In addition, the criminal acts that shed blood and focus on violence they plot for are no secret either. These acts are far removed from the simplest moralities of political action.

This international fanaticism that these extremists and terrorists allege is nothing but proof of these people's lust for terrorism to shake the stability of Islamic countries and establish theocratic regimes based on custodianship, control, and the total disregard for all laws and institutions.

The fate of these trivial practices will always be bitter failure since planning for growth and democracy is stronger and longer-lasting than planning for corruption and chaos.

'Danger' in Sudanese-Iranian Ties Viewed

NC2712210591 Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 23 Dec 91 p 34, 35

[From the "Personal Papers" column by Ahmad Hamrush: "Frankly Speaking On Sudan"]

[Excerpts] I have heard bitter complaints about the regime in Sudan from every Sudanese I have met in Egypt or abroad, portraying a bleak and tragic picture of the fraternal country. I have often given thoughts to writing about the situation in Sudan, which directly affects Egypt, but I preferred to wait to avoid causing incitement because I have always called for self-restraint and Arab solidarity. [passage omitted]

As the saying goes, anyone who fails to speak out the truth is a dumb devil. Some of the events taking place in Sudan basically concern the Sudanese people, but others concern the Egyptian people as well. We live in a democratic regime which the people support and are struggling to invigorate and entrench. Hence, we reject the endangerment of security and stability by terrorist groups that disguise themselves in the garb of the true Islamic religion. We in Egypt have had long experience with those individuals, reared amid religious groups, who have assassinated a long list of public figures, beginning with Dr. Ahmad Mahir and not ending with Dr. Rif'at al-Mahjub, and have committed many heinous terrorist acts.

No people agree to be stabbed in the back by individuals who live and train in dark ignorance and seek to reach power through terrorism. Frankly speaking, the Arab nation has suffered from attempts to export the Iranian revolution and ideas to Arab and Islamic countries. Lebanon had for a long time been the arena where the Iranian revolution propagated the ideas of kidnapping Western hostages.

Thus, we feel that if the fraternal Sudanese people, who are suffering from the authorities' suppression, are being penetrated by backward and terrorist forces from Iran through the so-called Islamic Front, and the Sudanese Government is seeking to encourage extremism and terrorism in Arab countries such as Tunisia, Algeria, and others as if Sudan has become Iran's bayonet in the Arab homeland, the danger will not be confined to the Sudanese people, who are suffering now more than ever before, but will affect the Egyptian people.

True, certain Sudanese officials make fine statements about the important and vital ties with Egypt, which we welcome; however, these statements do not relieve us, remove suspicion, or conceal the facts. What can we say about the visit to Sudan by Hashemi-Rafsanjani and a delegation that included a large number of military and intelligence officers? What can we say about the declaration to arm and train the Sudanese Army, which is under the complete control of the Islamic Front? How can we explain this new cooperation between the state

that is the source of terrorism in the Middle East and Sudan, which has always been a symbol of tolerance?

Can the silence of Egyptian popular organizations be accepted now that Sudan has turned into a center of terrorism and backwardness, the effects of which will spread to neighboring countries? I mention the popular organizations only out of concern that relations remain good between the Cairo and Khartoum regimes. The Egyptian regime was the first to welcome 'Umar al-Bashir before the facts were revealed and things deteriorated to this hazardous pitfall. The circumstances, however, have changed and the Sudanese regime's course is suspicious. I will write on Sudan again.

Morocco

Communique Recognizes CIS Members, Republics

LD3012212691 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Coperation today issued a communique in which it says: The Kingdom of Morocco has received with satisfaction the founding of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS], and it announces its recognition of each of its newly independent states. The Kingdom of Morocco also records the decision of the Russian Federation, with support from the rest of the CIS member states, to replace the Soviet Union at the United Nations, including membership of the Security Council, and the other international organizations.

In letters to his opposite numbers in the CIS member states, Abdellatif Filali, the minister of state in charge of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, expressed the wish of Morocco to establish diplomatic relations with the CIS member states, and its determination to work for the strengthening of the relations of friendship and cooperation with them.

Saudi Minister Meets King Hassan in Marrakech

LD2812124991 Rabat MAP in English 1232 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Marrakesh, Dec 28 (MAP)—Saudi second deputy premier and minister of aviation and defense Friday left Marrakech at the end of a one-day visit to Morocco. During his stay in Marrakech, the Saudi official was received by King Hassan II.

UN Delegate Assails OAU Chairman's Letter

LD2812125991 Rabat MAP in English 1225 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] New York, Dec. 28 (MAP)—Chairman of the group of member-states of the Organisation of African Unity at the UN was not mandated to circulate, on behalf of the African states, a statement of the OAU secretary general on the UN secretary general report on the Sahara, says a letter addressed by Morocco's permanent delegate to UN to the UN Security Council president.

The Moroccan diplomat draws the Council president's attention to the fact that the said group has not been convened to discuss the statement or say whether it agrees that such an initiative be taken on its behalf.

The statement, said the letter, is a personal initiative that does not commit members of the African group to the UNO, the statement claims to give the stance of the OAU secretariat general and cannot legally claim to reflect the viewpoint of the organisation of member states and even less that of the OAU president who is involved in the peace process in the Saharan issue.

Such deeds, went on the letter, is only meant to jeopardize the UN secretary general's ongoing efforts to settle once for all the issue and to create a serious confusion.

Sudan

Commonwealth of Independent States Recognized

EA3012194591 Omdurman National Unity Radio in English 1500 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] The Sudan has officially recognized the Commonwealth of Independent States, CIS, which has replaced the Soviet Union, and decided to regard Sudan's embassy in Moscow as the Sudan's embassy accredited to the Republic of Russia. In a statement issued yesterday, the Foreign Ministry announced Sudan's recognition of the commonwealth of eight independent states which replaced the former Soviet Union. The statement also confirmed that Sudan is keen to establish diplomatic relations with the other members of the CIS. The statement further indicated Sudan's foreign policy that respects the choices of peoples.

Spokesman Hails Iraqi Visit; Iraq Thanks RCC

EA3012213091 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1315 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Major General Muhammad 'Abdallah Uwaydah, the official spokesman of the Armed Forces, has said the visit of the Iraqi military delegation to Sudan comes within the framework of the fraternal relations between the two brotherly countries. It is also a participation by the Iraqi brothers in the Sudanese people's celebrations of our glorious independence anniversary. Maj. Gen. Uwaydah praised the warm relations linking the peoples of Sudan and Iraq, and those between the two fraternal armies. The visit confirms the unity of destiny and objective, and the standing together in the same line against all the conspiracies being plotted by the enemies of the Arab and Islamic nation. He affirmed the need to lift the economic blockade against the steadfast Iraqi people and their Army. The visiting Iraqi delegation has met the chairman of the Revolution Command Council [RCC] and the Council of Ministers and a number of state officials.

[In a Khartoum-datelined report, Khartoum SUNA in English at 1725 GMT on 30 December also reports, "Member of the RCC, Maj-Gen al-Tijani Adam al-Tahir, has received a written message from the member of the Iraqi RCC and vice-president, Taha Yasin Ramadan. The Iraqi ambassador to the Sudan, 'Abd-al-Samad Hamad, who conveyed the message to al-Tahir Monday [30 December], said the message contained the thanks and gratitude of Iraq to the Sudan for its stance toward Iraq in all spheres, particularly Sudan's stances in the international conferences, the last of which is the Dakar Islamic summit conference. This is in addition to the spiritual and material support of the Sudan to the Iraqi nation."]

Al-Bashir Reports on Hashemi-Rafsanjani Visit

EA3012205591 Khartoum SUNA in French 0936 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Khartoum, 30 Dec (SUNA)—General 'Umar al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council [RCC] and the Council of Ministers, has reported to the latter on the results of the recent visit to Sudan by Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the Iranian president.

During the regular meeting of the Council of Ministers on 29 December in Khartoum, Gen. al-Bashir emphasized the success of Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani's visit, which opened up new horizons for Sudanese external relations. He added that the level of the delegation that accompanied President Hashemi-Rafsanjani reflected the preoccupation of the Islamic Republic of Iran with the distinguished relations between the two countries and the importance of promoting them in the interests of both peoples.

Gen. al-Bashir also declared that a number of agreements and protocols covering various sectors of bilateral cooperation were signed during the visit, adding that the Iranian minister of construction had been charged with implementing the agreements and protocols signed between the two countries. He also indicated that Iran was going to contribute efficiently in oil prospecting and refining as well as in road construction in Sudan.

Sudanese-Iranian relations will see a considerable positive change in the cooperation and coordination between the two countries in the coming period, the RCC chairman indicated.

Saudi Arabia

Progress in Drafting Laws, Commonwealth Welcomed

LD3012174091 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1535 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 30 December (SPA)—King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, presided over the Saudi Arabian Cabinet's meeting at al-Yamamah Palace in Riyadh this afternoon.

Following the meeting, Information Minister 'Ali al-Sha'ir made a statement to SPA in which he said:

King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz began the meeting by briefing the Cabinet on the progress made in drawing up the basic law of government, the consultative council law, and the regions law. He said that in view of the work being done to complete some aspects of these laws, they will be promulgated some time during the month of Sha'ban 1412 [mid-February to mid-March 1992].

The minister of information added: Afterward, the Cabinet reviewed the various political developments in the Arab and international arenas and considered the current events pertaining to the republics that declared their independence following the end of the USSR and the resignation of President Gorbachev.

Within this framework, and in the light of concepts expressed by the custodian of the two holy mosques on the basis of the reports he has received from political quarters, the Cabinet issued the following statement:

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia welcomes the declaration of independence by the former USSR republics, namely the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzia.

While declaring its recognition of the independence of these republics as a matter assisting the consolidation of the right of all people to determine their fate and plan their future, the government of the custodian of the two holy mosques expresses its hope that this step will lead to bolstering security and stability in this [word missing as received] of the world as well as to promoting international peace and security.

The government of the custodian of the two holy mosques also welcomes the declaration issued on 21 December at Alma-Ata, the capital of Kazakhstan, concerning the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the pledge that these states have thereby undertaken to honor the international commitments which bound the former USSR by the agreements and treaties it had concluded.

The government expresses its wishes for the security, stability and progress of the peoples of these governments. [passage omitted]

Yemen

Good Ties Desired With Commonwealth

JN3012143191 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] The Presidential Council issued a statement today recognizing the republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the republic of Georgia. The following is the text of the statement:

The Republic of Yemen has watched with great interest the important changes and developments taking place in the commonwealth of the states that formerly made up the USSR, as well as the voluntary arrangements made by the republics that participated in the Alma-Ata conference on 21 December 1991.

Proceeding from the political foundations of the Republic of Yemen and its respect for people's will to choose their political and social systems democratically and (?peacefully), the (?Presidential Council) of the Republic of Yemen welcomes the new sovereign states and their membership in the world community on equal footing with all other countries in accordance with international conventions. We also welcome the new commonwealth established by those states in Alma-Ata on 21 December 1991.

The Republic of Yemen, which used to have close relations of friendship and cooperation with the former USSR, declares its recognition of the republics of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, (?Kyrgyzstan), Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenia, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, and Georgia. The Republic of Yemen is looking forward to continuing the march of friendship and cooperation with all of these republics for our mutual interests and prosperity and for the sake of peace, stability, and freedom for all people throughout the world.

No Loss of Life in Baghdad Hotel Explosion

JN3012195291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1942 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Baghdad, 30 Dec (INA)—The explosion in a private car in a parking lot of the 'Ashtar Sheraton Hotel in Baghdad today crushed 10 cars, including one belonging to the United Nations which was parked in the hotel's lot. One female worker at the Sheraton Hotel was slightly wounded in the incident. She is the only casualty.

In a statement to INA, a Civil Defense Directorate official said that the explosion in the hotel's parking lot did not result in any loss of life and that the competent authorities are investigating the incident.

Al-Zubaydi: Aggression by U.S., Allies Continues

JN3012201391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1912 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 30 Dec (INA)—Prime Minister Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi has stressed that America and its allies are still continuing the aggression against Iraq. This remark came in statements made to Arab and foreign journalists as he inaugurated a museum documenting the effects of the aggression and the reconstruction march organized by the Ministry of Culture and Information.

Mr. Muhammad Hamzah said: Despite everything, Iraq's people and leadership are alert and cautious to the continuous harassment by America and its collaborators.

The prime minister added: We hear and notice that the good people and those who love peace among the American people and the rest of world's peoples are loudly demanding that the blockade imposed on Iraq be lifted. They are calling for goodness and peace in the entire world. He stressed: We are confident that the American people are different from their rulers. He said that this Bush is determined to continue the aggression against Iraq. The proof of this is the unjust blockade on Iraq's children, elderly, and people. We beseech God Almighty for all sides to cooperate with each other in the interest of peace and benevolence. Culture and Information Minister Hamid Yusuf Hammadi delivered a speech during the opening ceremony of the museum in which he stressed that the culture and information sector, especially transmission stations and centers for radio and television production, were the main targets of the aggressors.

He said that the bombing during the first chapter of the aggression targeted 24 transmission stations, production centers, and radio and television transmission stations. Many places, he added, were damaged as a result of the brutal bombing of all of the governorates by the planes of aggression.

The minister added that the chapter of treason and treachery has enabled the agents to complete their masters' crimes by attacking what was left from the hostile bombing and by destroying nine radio and television transmission stations and eight museums. [passage omitted]

Minister Accuses U.S. Navy of Impounding Ship

JN3012175691 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Iraqi Trade Minister Muhammad Mahdi Salih has accused the U.S. Navy of impounding a merchant ship in the Gulf of Aqaba. The ship was carrying 14,000 tonnes of sugar to Iraq, taking into consideration, he added, that the international embargo on Iraq does not include medicines and food.

Statement on Iranian Defense Minister's Remarks

JN3012162791 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Commenting on Iranian Defense Minister Akbar Torkan's remarks to the news media in Qatar, a responsible Foreign Ministry source has stated the following to INA:

One of the most negative and serious phenomena promoted and disseminated by the forces of hegemony and new colonialism is the persistent interference in the internal affairs of other states, depending on whether or not these states are submitting to the will of those forces. The prevalence of this phenomenon has prompted some regimes in our region to adopt exposed, opportunistic positions. They flatter the forces of hegemony and new colonialism in an effort to seek illegal gains, believing that this will help them to jump on the bandwagon and share the spoils.

This disgraceful conduct, of course, reflects a severe shortsightedness. Those who find it easy to interfere in the internal affairs of others will certainly have to bear the consequences of interference in their own affairs by others. Furthermore, the foreign hegemonistic forces that encourage these regimes will be ready to turn against them at any moment they deem appropriate to their own interests, leaving those regimes to their black destiny. The case of the former shah of Iran, who thought it easy to interfere in Iraq's internal affairs to please the United States and implement its policy, is perhaps a prominent example of this.

The Iranian regime that succeeded the shah has continued the same policy, causing further trouble to Iran. Regrettably, we still see a number of Iranian officials adopting opportunistic positions and flattering the foreign forces and their agents in the region, hoping to make illegal gains. Their means of achieving this is to interfere in Iraq's internal affairs. The latest example is the statements made by the Iranian regime's defense minister, Akbar Torkan, to the news media in Qatar. In his remarks he vulgarly repeated the same themes of the unjust campaign launched by the administration of U.S.

President Bush against Iraq and the Arab nation, and called for interfering in Iraq's internal affairs.

In denouncing the statements of Akbar Torkan, we call upon the Iranians to heed the danger of this conduct, not to Iraq and the peoples of the region, but, above all, to Iran itself. We call on them to recall the bitter experience of the shah of Iran—when he deemed it easy to interfere in Iraq's internal affairs—as well as the results of Khomeyni's expansionist policy against Iraq and the Arab nation.

We firmly believe that all those who pursue the policy of interference in the internal affairs of others, such as the Iranian regime, will suffer a great deal because of it. This serious policy is a double-edged sword; those using this sword will not be safe from its dangers. At any rate, no matter what (?titles) the Iranian defense minister gives to himself, he disgracefully joined Bush, his agents, and the masters of Zionism in repeating the tone of overthrowing the regime in Iraq. We say to this little minister and to all those who dream of enslaving the people of Iraq: Choke to death; the people of Iraq, with all their cultural and militant history, have irrevocably chosen an inspired leader, one of the nation's knights, the son of the people, and the leader of their march—Saddam Husayn.

Foreign Ministry: Iran Alone Responsible for War

JN3012203691 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Iraq has stressed that Iran alone bears full international responsibility for the continuation of its war against Iraq and for all that war's consequences. What Iraq did was a reaction and an exercise of the legitimate right of self-defense. These statements came in a letter addressed to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar from Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn. The letter was distributed today, Monday, as an official Security Council document.

In the letter, Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn explains that the secretary general's report on Paragraph 6 of Security Council Resolution 598 ignored one substantial point: namely, Iran's rejection of Resolution 479 of 28 September 1980 and all subsequent resolutions—514 of 1982, 522 of 1982, 540 of 1983, 582 of 1986, and 588 of 1986. Iran also rejected Resolution 598 of 1987—a resolution accepted by Iraq as soon as it was issued. Iran continued to reject this resolution for a full year, accepting it only after having suffered a complete military defeat.

There is documented evidence, the foreign minister said, that Iran was the party that began shelling Iraqi cities and villages in July 1980, intensifying its shelling of Iraqi cities on 4 September 1988 using 175-mm guns. It used its aircraft against Iraq and perpetrated a long series of attacks, threats, and violations of Iraq's sovereignty, territorial safety, and internal security as part of a declared plan to control Iraq and to subjugate it to Iranian authority.

The foreign minister stated that the secretary general's underestimation of the seriousness of these aggressions, violations, and threats is neither in keeping with UN principles and obligations toward member states, nor in harmony with the way he has interpreted many international disputes.

In a statement on 13 December, an Iraqi Foreign Ministry spokesman explained that the report by the secretary general on Paragraph 6 of Resolution 598 contains personal judgments that hold no legal value whatsoever. They represent Perez de Cuellar's personal viewpoint, which he adopted to please the Iranian regime and to serve suspect deals in favor of the West, especially the United States.

It is known that Paragraph 6 of Security Council Resolution 598 clearly calls on the UN secretary general to assign a neutral party to investigate responsibility for the war; it does not entitle him to make personal judgments.

Saddam Chairs Armed Forces General Command Talks

JN3012124591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1206 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Baghdad, 30 Dec (INA)—Staff Field Marshal President Saddam Husayn, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, has presided over a meeting of the Armed Forces General Command.

The meeting was attended by Staff General 'Izzat Ibrahim, vice chairman of the Revolution Command Council [RCC] and deputy commander in chief of the Armed Forces; and Staff Lieutenant General 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, RCC member and defense minister.

Defense Minister's New Year Message to Saddam

JN3012080491 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Cable of congratulations to President Saddam Husayn from Defense Minister Staff Lieutenant General 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, on the occasion of the new year—date not given]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

Leader President Field Marshal Saddam Husayn, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, and president of the Republic of Iraq:

While we live through the days of the militant stage, the stage of reconstruction of what has been destroyed by the evil enemies, such as economic and services facilities after the 30-state aggression against our militant state, the new year comes as our people are stronger and more determined to continue steadfastness and to challenge the enemies' conspiracies aimed at undermining Iraq's security, sovereignty, and national unity. Iraq will continue to be the fortress of steadfastness and the home of challenge in support of right under your courageous

leadership, which confronts injustice and aggression so that our people remain free, strong, dignified, and so that Iraq may keep its head high.

My master, leader president: In my name and on behalf of your zealous men of our heroic army—commanders, officers and other ranks, we offer the sincerest congratulations to your esteemed person. We pledge that we will offer our lives in defense of our dear homeland against all forms of agentry and plotting. Your courageous army will remain a brandished sword in your hand in confronting the enemies so that the God is Great banner continues to flutter in the skies of great Iraq. Let all plotters and enemies know that a people led by the unique leader Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him, will not be humiliated, and that the final victory will be for them, God willing, because they are inspired with determination, patience, and jihad from your excellency, you, the glory of the Iraqis and the pride of the Arabs. May God grant you success and make you always an asset for the steadfast Iraqi believers until God Almighty permits the completion of His final victory against all enemies.

We pray to God Almighty to have us always celebrate while our people are enjoying pride and glory under your wise leadership, and to make our new year a year of prosperity and constant victory. Peace be upon you.

[Signed] Staff Lt. Gen. 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, defense minister

Minister on Rationing, Production of Lubricants

JN2912103591 Baghdad AL-QADISIYAH in Arabic 27 Dec 91 p 5

[By Aghadir Mahdi]

[Text] Oil Minister Usamah 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Hiti has stated that the ministry has repaired 90 percent of the production units damaged by the barbaric bombing of the unjust 30-state aggression, thanks to the qualified members of the oil sector. He confirmed this to the AL-QADISIYAH correspondent.

He also said that what remains to be repaired includes very badly damaged storage units and other units, which require imported materials and equipment from abroad. He said: However, as you know, due to the current situation our prosperous Iraq is experiencing—namely, the unjust embargo—we are compelled to seek alternatives in order to repair several of these units that serve the citizens.

He said: We hope that our cadres will complete a number of important projects by the end of this month, including the Lubricants Refinery No. 3. The al-Shamiyah station of the al-Basrah Oil Company has been repaired, and we will inaugurate the lubricants refinery of the al-Basrah Refinery on the anniversary of the pride of revolutions, 8 February. The new refinery will have a capacity of 70,000 tonnes a day to be added to the al-Dawrah Refinery capacity of 70,000 tonnes a day, which is less than its total capacity, due to the lack of steam boilers used for producing lubricants.

The minister explained that they are serious in their efforts to secure lubricants, and to lift rationing after insuring two important elements: namely, producing large quantities of lubricants, and providing additives used in the production of lubricants, which basically employs large quantities of additives exceeding 15 percent of the lubricant weight. Additives are imported from abroad, and cannot be obtained under the embargo. At present, however, a specialized party is carrying out intense research to produce these additives, which are still under experimentation.

He said: In my personal opinion, if we manage to produce more than our consumption needs of lubricants, we can export the surplus as base oils, and import in exchange additives used in producing these oils to meet local needs fully. We would then seriously consider lifting the rationing, even though we believe that oil rationing is important. I would like to assure the citizens that we will lift rationing soon.

He added: We will also seek to improve the quality of engine oils by using more additives in order to increase the viscosity of the lubricants, enabling their use for a longer period. On completing this step, we will have fulfilled our commitment toward our dear citizens.

The minister added: As a result of the 30-state aggression on Iraq, the Oil Ministry's hydrogenation units, used in purifying white oil and ridding it of sulfur compounds and other impurities, sustained heavy damage. For this reason, some quantities of oil distributed among the citizens were impure, yellowish, and had a different odor.

He said: The ministry's installations managed to maintain the white oil hydrogenation units at the Bayji Refineries in Salah al-Din Governorate, where the production of white oil free of impurities has been resumed. Citizens in Baghdad have been provided with this product. The rest of Iraq's governorates will be provided with this kind of oil, particularly after maintenance work on the al-Dawrah Refinery hydrogenation units is completed. It is to be hoped that this will take place by the middle of next year, after the necessary materials to repair it are made available. I emphasize that the oil currently being distributed to the citizens is safe, and is the same quality as pure oil free of impurities despite the difference in color and odor.

He also said: Basically, oil is hydrogenated in order to be used in jet planes, not in households. Here, I would like to explain that the difference is only in the odor of the oil, not its specifications. Citizens should know well the meaning of hydrogenating oil: namely, treating oil with hydrogen to remove sulfur compounds.

Finance Minister on Banknotes Impounded by UK

JN2912114791 Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 25 Dec 91 p 10

[Text] The Ministry of Finance has pumped quantities of Iraqi currency of the 5- and 10-dinar denominations into the salaries of employees and those receiving pensions this month in order to avoid the scarcity in circulation of these denominations.

ALIF BA' asked Finance Minister Majid 'Abd Ja'far about the Iraqi banknotes impounded by Britain. He said: Iraq, like many countries, used to print its money in Britain. We had a consignment of banknotes printed and ready for delivery before the 2 August 1990 events. After the unjust Security Council resolutions were issued and the oppressive embargo imposed on our mujahid country, however, the British Government impounded this consignment and placed it among frozen deposits, when in fact it is not a deposit in the real sense; that is, it is not foreign currency, but rather local currency used in the local market. Britain also prevented the dispatcher from sending any quantity of it.

The minister said that efforts are being made to complete the order, but until now the British Government has not taken a definite and clear position.

Regarding releasing some of our deposits in Britain, the minister of finance denied any deals with Britain. He said: This is related to the pertinent Security Council resolutions, which leave the issue up to the countries concerned. Britain, however, then linked the release of Ian Richter to the release of the deposits as was published in newspapers on 24 November 1991. Indeed, after he was released, Britain released some of the deposits.

'Treasonous Link' Seen Between GCC, U.S.

JN3012090591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0750 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 30 Dec (INA)—AL-QADISIYAH has emphasized that the final communique issued by the so-called summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] is a repeat of the agent and treasonous stands the GCC is pursuing against the causes of the Arab nation, and reveals the hostility toward Iraqi progress and principled, pan-Arab policies.

In a news analysis today, the paper says that what is particularly noticeable is that the GCC summit has consolidated openly and without any political deception the treasonous link between the GCC states, particularly the Saudi and Kuwaiti regimes, and foreign occupation. It has also shown how these regimes hasten to throw themselves into the lap of U.S. imperialism to falsely legitimize the U.S.-Atlantic-Zionist occupation of the region.

The paper adds that what is also noticeable are the fallacies contained in the final communique of the suspicious summit against Iraq, which reflect persistence in hostility toward its people and embodies the treasonous link with the U.S. conspiracy in its various chapters, particularly the chapter of the unjust economic blockade. [passage omitted]

Attack on Kifri, Karkuk Reportedly Continues

NC3012193991 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] The Iraqi regime's troops are bombarding Kifri in northern Iraq for the third day. The Voice of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan has reported that the Baghdad regime's forces, under the pretense of pursuing Kurdish fighters, bombarded Karkuk suburbs, killing or wounding a large number of defenseless residents. It should be recalled that the Voice of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan yesterday reported strong attacks on Kareza and Kifri, located 150 km south of Karkuk.

Shamir Orders Discipline in Electoral Reform Vote

TA3012211491 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1830 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Excerpt] Tonight Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir ordered Likud faction members to follow the Likud Central Committee resolution, that is, to vote against the electoral reform bill that is scheduled to come up for a vote on 1 January. Our Knesset affairs correspondent Dov Gilhar is on the line from the Knesset with the initial details:

Tonight the prime minister cast his full authority behind the campaign to defeat the electoral reform bill. Speaking at the Likud faction meeting tonight, he said: It is obvious to all that the Likud must win, and it does not matter how we do it. We must do all that is necessary to obtain a victory for the Likud, and if the Likud wins, this entire nation and all political elements abroad will understand that nothing can be done. The Likud governs Israel and will continue doing so by national consensus. For that reason, our victory tomorrow [in the Knesset vote on the state budget] and the day after tomorrow is important. [passage omitted]

[Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew at 1900 GMT on 30 December reports that Shamir "is not ruling out the possibility of early elections" and that he told tonight's Likud meeting that "it does not matter if elections are held in two months or in 10." The television report goes on to say that although there is no "formal decision to impose party discipline, Mr. Shamir called on the Likud faction tonight to vote as one man against the proposed law for the direct election of the prime minister.]

Article Says Army at Odds With Government

TA2712112491 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (LESHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 27 Dec 91 pp 3, 16

[Article by Ron Ben-Yishay: "Generals Versus the Political Echelon]

[Excerpts] Avihu Bin-Nun is a fighter pilot, and everybody knows that fighter pilots, even at the most senior levels of command, are not very good at holding their tongue. Seven months ago, Bin-Nun was already fed up with the political echelon's way of making—or not making—vital decisions pertaining to the state's security. The statements he made in his interview to BIT'ON HEYL HA'AVIR this week pale in comparison to remarks he made at the time during conversations with friends and associates. Bin-Nun even considered resigning after the Air Force was forced to make painful cutbacks. [passage omitted]

Bin-Nun is not the only general in the General Staff who feels that the political leadership "acts irresponsibly and impracticably" when forced to make and implement long-term strategic decisions pertaining to the country's security. There are good reasons to assume that most of the General Staff share this opinion, with some generals holding even more extreme positions than Bin-Nun.

Unlike Bin-Nun, most of the current members of the General Staff bear no hostility to Defense Minister Moshe Arens. They are aware, of course, that the question of "what is good for Israel Aircraft Industries" figures very highly alongside—or even ahead of—the question of "what is good for the security of the State of Israel."

The generals are unhappy with this, to say the very least, and some of them call Arens "the aircraft industries minister" or even "Dr. Strangelove." In general, however, there are correct and even harmonious work relations between the top echelons of the Defense Ministry and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]. This stems mainly from the almost total agreement among Defense Minister Arens, Defense Ministry Director General David 'Ivri, the chief of staff, and the General Staff on the necessity of basing the IDF's strength in the future on smart, precision-guided weapons, sophisticated command and control equipment, and long-range intelligence.

What frustrates the generals is the way the government functions. To be more precise: the government's failure to function as the body responsible for setting the right order of national priorities and its failure to make the strategic decisions and then back them with a prudent budgetary policy.

The chief of staff and most of the other generals openly say that there is only a small likelihood of Israel's being involved in a war during the next two or three years, and that even if such a war breaks out, the IDF can handle the threats facing the country in the short term. Therefore, they agree with the cabinet ministers that at this stage, priority must be given to immigrant absorption and economic recovery; however, they are upset that the government is investing hundreds of millions of valuable shekels to expand existing settlements in the territories and set up new ones.

It is important to stress that this does not stem from ideological or political opposition. The members of the General Staff are not of one mind on the question of whether the settlements contribute to Israel's security. There is, however, a general consensus that the need to rebuild the IDF's strength must be moved up on the national order of priorities.

"The existing settlements will suffice to support the government's political position," said one of the generals. "A new settlement, or even 10 new ones, will not essentially change the picture, while we lack the funds to safeguard the existence of the Israeli people." The general added: "The day when Shamir will have to decide if he wants to invest in Eretz Yisra'el or in the survival of the Israeli people is not far off."

The IDF's and the U.S. intelligence community's most current reports estimate that the strategic balance in the Middle East may change dramatically in five to 10 years,

and not necessarily in Israel's favor. Iran may achieve a dangerous nuclear and missile capability, there are still approximately 18,000 technicians and scientists in Iraq, who have reached the most advanced stages of developing a nuclear bomb and long-range ballistic missiles; Syria is taking its first steps toward achieving nuclear capability, and it already possesses medium-range surface-to-surface missiles; Kazakhstan, one of the four members of the Soviet nuclear weapons club, has emphasized its Islamic identity and has already hosted Yasir 'Arafat on an official visit; Saudi Arabia, the Gulf states, and Egypt are procuring large quantities of modern Western weapons systems and missiles.

All this obligates the IDF to undergo a technological revolution to enable it to defend the home front against a nuclear attack and to mobilize the reserves and surprise the enemy at the front before Israel is exhausted by several days of fighting. The IDF can accomplish all this only by investing resources in the local production of unique weapons systems and the supporting electronic systems that will enable the most effective and efficient use of these weapons.

The development of a weapons system or a backup system takes five to 10 years. That is why the IDF, under orders from Chief of Staff Barak, prepared a multiyear procurement and training plan, which was supposed to bear fruit at about the same time as the change in the regional strategic equation.

The plan was presented to the cabinet on the assumption that not all of it would be approved, but with the hope that whatever was approved would allow the IDF to begin developments and procurements that would be completed within a few years. In addition to the current work-year budget, the IDF wanted to be promised a budgetary framework that would stand at its disposal over the next five years to plan and implement whatever projects the cabinet endorsed.

The IDF generals are not bothered by the size of the budget slice allocated to the defense establishment in 1992. They feel frustrated by the way the long-range aspects of the defense budget are being handled and by the fact that the cabinet was only willing to approve the principles of the plan and to more or less endorse the budgetary framework for the coming year, while leaving some issues unresolved and open to further haggling with the Treasury.

While the haggling over what was already ostensibly agreed upon continues, Treasury officials have already notified the IDF that they also intend to reduce its budget over the coming years. It has still not been decided when, how much, and where. The prime minister, who was asked to intervene, has maintained his usual sphinx-like silence, and the finance minister is busy squabbling with the construction and housing minister. Under these conditions, the chief of staff and his deputy must issue instructions about which projects to develop and about signing contracts for billions of shekels without knowing whether they will be able to continue the projects and procure the systems in the next few years.

As has already happened more than once in the past, the monies invested in certain projects this year may go down the drain because there will be no budget to continue them. Moreover, the IDF may be forced to pay heavy fines for canceling contracts and business engagements.

A senior general recently said that "the proposed multiyear plan is really a skeleton plan." The general explained that "the plan was formulated by establishing a balance between various military components, which together are supposed to supply a reasonable response to the threats we are facing." He added that, "if the plan is not implemented as one package, in an orderly manner and over several years, we will not have a deterrence capability when the Middle East goes nuclear, and we shall find ourselves in the next war without the ability to defend our home front or to win on the battlefield."

Some generals are more optimistic, of course. They are the fatalists; those who have accepted the inevitability of having to function in a state of constant vagueness and uncertainty and who hope that "eventually things will turn out all right." They abhor the system, of course, and are painfully aware of the heavy price it takes in casualties and bloodshed, but in the absence of any alternative they are reluctantly willing to continue the endless battles with the Treasury, without any government backing and without any unequivocal decisions by the government. They hope the memory of the Scud missile barrages, and the fear of a mushroom-shaped cloud will win where common sense and administrative logic have failed time and again.

The budget, however, is not the only issue of disagreement. A significant number of generals believe that the government is not doing enough to promote the peace process and to give it momentum. They claim Israel should adopt more flexible positions on procedural issues and change the method of negotiation with the Syrians. The aim should be an attempt to achieve as soon as possible an agreement with any Arab party willing to do so, even if they are only partial agreements and even if they entail small territorial compromises.

The reason for that is that the State of Israel today can still negotiate with the Arabs from a position of strength and still can depend on U.S. backing. If it negotiates with fervor, Israel can formulate agreements that reflect its security interests. In the future, if and when the Arabs purchase nuclear capability, their readiness to reach a compromise will decline, if not disappear completely.

In addition, as negotiations are prolonged and remain bogged down in procedural matters, the political rope will grow shorter, and the military and economic aid the U.S. Administration and Congress is prepared to give the Jewish state will diminish. "U.S. support and backing are today one of the three main components of

the State of Israel's prowess in the new world disorder," one of the generals said. "Already there has been a serious erosion in our support in Washington, and if we continue to drag our feet in the political process, we might come to a real confrontation with the main superpower. The Arabs have understood that and the military potential for them in such a situation."

One can say that many members of the General Staff are currently in a situation that psychologists calls "cognitive dissonance." They are implementing a policy with which they do not fully identify, and in particular they do not agree with the way in which they are being called on to implement it. Every novice psychologist knows that such a situation leads to lack of motivation and avoidance of responsibility. Since we are talking about people who are responsible for the security of the State of Israel, and who must do their best, the political echelon must now reevaluate the way it functions and enable them to carry out their tasks the best way they can.

Report on Airlift of Soviet Jews Denied

TA2812185191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 28 Dec 91

[Text] Jewish Agency Chairman Simha Dinitz has dismissed the report in THE BOSTON GLOBE newspaper claiming that Israel is planning a huge airlift of Soviet Jews. Dinitz said his remarks to the paper had been misinterpreted. He had said Israel is capable of flying out 50,000 Jews a month, but this did not mean special preparations were being made. Rather, Dinitz said, it means that with the direct flights we are ready at any time to bring a large number of Jews to Israel. THE BOSTON GLOBE reported earlier that the Jewish Agency chairman had said a mass evacuation was being planned in preparation for a worst-scenario situation in which Jews would be in jeopardy, especially the 200,000 Jews in Muslim republics.

Direct Flights From Tashkent

TA3012204491 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Jewish Agency Chairman Simha Dinitz has announced that the agency will launch direct Tashkent-Israel flights, bringing Jews from the Muslim republics. Speaking at a news conference in Jerusalem, he said that some 200,000 Jews live in those republics, and there is concern for their well-being.

Mr. Dinitz anticipated that 150,000 to 200,000 immigrants would arrive in Israel in 1992, and that about 1 million immigrants from the former USSR will have arrived by 1995.

No Unilateral Move in Lebanon Before Accord

TA2512171991 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Report from south Lebanon by Menahem Horowitz]

[Excerpts] Uri Lubrani, coordinator of government activities in the territories, and Major General Yitzhaq Mordekhay, commander of the Northern Command, this morning came to south Lebanon to extend New Year's wishes to South Lebanese Army commanders and soldiers and to the residents of the region. In all the meetings and discussions they attended, Uri Lubrani was asked whether Israel plans to make a unilateral move in Lebanon, or in the Christian township of Jazzin.

[Begin recording] [Lubrani] Israel has no intention of making any unilateral moves. Anything done on Israel's behalf will be in the framework of negotiations on a peace accord. I did not hear any Lebanese delegate utter the name Jazzin during the discussions in Washington.

[Horowitz] Will Israel not move an inch from the security zone in south Lebanon while Syria remains in Lebanon?

[Lubrani] We have no intention of changing our current deployment in Lebanon as long as we do not have a full peace agreement. [passage omitted]

[Horowitz] Was the kidnapping of the three Lebanese residents a new development, or was it an additional attempt by Israel to press for the return of our POW's and MIA's?

[Lubrani] I will take this opportunity to make a clear statement on that issue: It was not a kidnapping; that operation was part of the Israeli Army's ongoing security activity. It had nothing to do with the negotiations for the release of our POW's. I know that there are all kinds of parties, including some senior ones, who are trying to connect the two issues. To the best of my judgment, there is no such connection. [end recording]

Arens Briefs Italy's Rognoni on Nonconventional Threat

TA2712121791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Report by army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe]

[Text] An IDF [Israel Defense Forces] honor guard greeted the Italian defense minister in the Defense Ministry plaza. The visiting minister held a meeting with Minister Arens and was briefed by the chief of staff, the Intelligence Branch chief, the Defense Ministry director general, and the head of the ministry's Defense Sales Department. The briefings included assessments about the Middle East situation one year after the Gulf war, a report on Israel's defense concept, and another on the Israel defense industries' capability.

During the meeting, Defense Minister Moshe Arens said that the current peace process rests on the Arab acknowledgment of Israel's power. All the wars Israel was forced to wage made it clear to the Arab countries that they cannot defeat Israel.

Minister Arens further said that concurrently with the peace process, the State of Israel is forced to make preparations to meet threats from countries such as Iraq, Iran, and Libya. These countries declare their opposition to peace with Israel and are procuring long-range missiles with chemical warheads and making attempts to attain nuclear capability. Minister Arens stressed that the State of Israel is preparing for that threat by building a defensive potential capable of meeting future nonconventional threats. One of the most important components of Israel's preparation is the Arrow project, in the framework of which Israel, in cooperation with the United States, is developing antiballistic missiles.

Minister Arens told his Italian counterpart that Israel and Italy share interests pertaining to the promotion of the peace process and the need to meet the threat from countries that have refused to participate in the process.

The Italian minister's visit to Israel will last four days, during which he will tour an Air Force base and visit Israel Aircraft Industries, as well as Yad Vashem and Masada.

Committee Approves Controls on Missile Exports

TA2512125491 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 25 Dec 91 p 1

[Report by On Levi]

[Excerpt] The Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee yesterday approved measures consistent with Israel's decision to join the MTCR [Missile Technology Control Regime] as of 1 January 1992.

A Defense Ministry spokesman said yesterday that the committee approved amendments to the Control of Commodities and Services Order pertaining to the export of warfare equipment and defense-related expertise. The amendments impose strict control on missile and missile technology exports, in compliance with the MTCR. [passage omitted]

Al-Husayni, Abu-Zayyad Address Peace Convention

TA3112093991 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 31 Dec 91 p 2

[Report by Eli Brenner]

[Excerpts] Faysal al-Husayni was almost one hour late for the "talking peace" convention organized by "'Ad Kan" [Enough is Enough], the university peace movement, which was held yesterday at the Bar-Shira Auditorium. He was held up by a serious road accident which blocked the exit from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv.

Al-Husayni, speaking in English, said that the Palestinians do not accept the term autonomy used by Prime Minister Shamir to describe the five-year interim period. "We consider this a transition period toward an independent Palestinian state, while Shamir sees autonomy as a mechanism to prevent the establishment of such a state," he said. Al-Husayni's solution for the issue of Jerusalem is one open city with two capitals—an Israeli capital in the western part of the city and a Palestinian one in East Jerusalem—with all parties having free access between the two parts of the city. Toward the 21st century, which will be characterized by the world's division into economic zones, al-Husayni proposes regional cooperation between Israel, Jordan, Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon. [passage omitted]

Ziyad Abu-Zayyad said that the Palestinian people have stopped questioning Israel's right to exist in the region and that everyone accepts its existence and the concept of two states for two peoples. He called on the PLO, Syria, and Lebanon to exhaust all efforts to release the Israeli POW's and return the MIA's. At the same time, he called for the release of Palestinian detainees held in prisons in the territories. [passage omitted]

Hamas Disrupts al-Husayni Rally

TA3012151391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists violently disrupted an information rally organized by Faysal al-Husayni in Tulkarm. Several hundred people had come to the rally. Hamas activists among the crowd threw stones and bottles at the stage upon which were standing Faysal al-Husayni and Ahmad Shraym, deputy chairman of the supreme committee recently established in the territories.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the rally lasted only about 10 minutes. Faysal al-Husayni and his colleague fled the hall and were also pelted with stones by Hamas activists outside the building. Tulkarm residents reported that approximately 10 Fatah activists accompanying Faysal al-Husayni on his way out were slightly injured by stones during the incident.

'More Liberal Policy' on Riots in Territories

TA2512140991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Text] A senior officer in the office of the Military Advocate General today reported that the standing orders governing administrative arrests in the territories, which had taken force with the exacerbation of the intifadah, have now been modified. From now on local military commanders will be authorized to detain rioters only for six months, not for an entire year.

In a meeting with correspondents on legal and judicial affairs, the senior officer said the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] was reconsidering its position on how to deal with riots and disturbances and would now adopt a more liberal policy. This change results from the drop in the number of disturbances.

Our correspondent Mira Amsalem reports that, according to IDF statistics, the number of administrative detainees in custody is now 90 percent lower than it

was at the intifadah's peak. The number of Arabs jailed in military detention facilities has dropped by approximately one-third during that period.

New Party To Run in Next Elections

TA3112094391 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 31 Dec 91 p 6

[Report by Mikhal Qedem]

[Text] 'Atid [Future], a new party which sees itself as a new and improved version of the defunct DCM [Democratic Movement for Change set up by the late Yiga'el Yadin in 1977], yesterday announced its intention to run in the next Knesset elections. The party advocates Israeli rule over part of the territories and granting sovereignty to the Palestinians in other parts. Its members include Yitzhaq Hofi, former head of the Mosad and director general of the Israel Electricity Company; Dov Tamari, a former Army chief intelligence officer; Professor Moshe Mani, former dean of Tel Aviv University; and others. The party is financially backed by Yequti'el Federman, proprietor of the Dan Hotels chain.

'Atid intends to become a strong middle-of-the-road party that will appeal to a broad cross-section of Israelis (41 percent of the electorate, according to polls) who define themselves as "neither right wing nor left wing" and which will determine the composition of the government.

"More than being a party, DCM was an agglomerate of stars without a unifying glue," party founders Ehud Peled, 'Ofer Ya'aqobi, and Eli Bar-Or stated yesterday. "It had neither a political backbone nor a consolidated platform. 'Atid has consolidated a set of principles and a platform outlining a clear ideology."

'Atid's platform mentions the establishment of "a sovereign Palestinian entity in parts of Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza, while Israeli sovereignty would be enforced in other parts. Judaea and Samaria would be demilitarized. Jerusalem would be under exclusive Israeli sovereignty, and its inhabitants would be able to choose between Palestinian and Israeli citizenship."

Golan Druze Leave for Studies in Syria

TA2612141991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] Fourteen students from the Druze villages on the Golan Heights, including one woman, left for Syria this morning through the al-Qunaytirah border crossing to study at Damascus University.

Our correspondent, Yo'el Dar, reports that the Syrian authorities awarded the students scholarships and a monthly stipend, apparently in an attempt to increase their influence among the Druze settlements on the Golan Heights. This is the second group to leave for studies in Syria this year.

Diplomatic Relations With Zambia Renewed

TA2512115191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Text] Israel and the Republic of Zambia have renewed diplomatic relations severed by Zambia in 1973. The two countries issued a joint statement saying they were interested in a strengthening of relations and cooperation.

King Husayn Receives Iran's Mohajerani

JN3012183191 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received at the Royal Hashemite Court this afternoon 'Ata'ollah Mohajerani, deputy president of the Islamic Republic of Iran for parliamentary and legal affairs, and his accompanying delegation.

Mohajerani conveyed the Iranian president's greetings and appreciation for his majesty, as well as a message on bilateral relations and the need to rehabilitate and to promote them in the service of the interests of the two Muslim peoples. Mohajerani also conveyed to his majesty the Iranian president's acceptance of his majesty's invitation to visit Jordan.

During the meeting, discussion dealt with various spheres of bilateral cooperation and ways to promote them. Views were exchanged on the international changes taking place and their repercussions on the region in particular and the Third World states in general. Discussion also focused on the peace issue and the current situation in the region. The guest delegation was briefed by his majesty on his assessment of the current peace process.

The meeting was attended by the Royal Hashemite Court chief and his majesty the king's adviser.

Al-Sa'ih Meets Mohajerani, Proposes Summit

JN3112082191 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 31 Dec 91 p 2

[Text] Amman—AL-DUSTUR—His Eminence Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sa'ih, speaker of the Palestine National Council [PNC], received an Iranian delegation headed by 'Ata'ollah Mohajerani, Iran's deputy president for legal and parliamentary affairs.

During the meeting, the means for reinforcing Iranian-Palestinian relations and supporting the Palestine problem were discussed.

Al-Sa'ih proposed holding a summit meeting between the Iranian and Palestinian presidents to discuss coordination between the two sides, especially concerning the protection of Islamic holy places.

The Iranian attache and the visiting delegation members attended the meeting on the Iranian side; and deputy PNC speaker Taysir Qub'ah and parliamentary adviser Mahmud Tayyim attended on the Palestinian side.

Budget Approved; Prime Minister Cited

JN3012175091 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1700 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] The Lower House of Parliament today approved the budget plan. The 45-vote in favor of the plan came at the end of a debate on the budget, which began yesterday. Deputies made their remarks during the past few days on the budget and the government's financial policy.

The prime minister, al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, said in his reply to the deputies' remarks that the Economic Council would act as a consultant in the various economic fields. He said the board would first give its counsel on whether to return to medium-term planning in the wake of two crises which the country had experienced, mainly that of the collapse of the dinar exchange rate and the Gulf crisis. The prime minister said problems of the country, including unemployment, poverty, and indebtedness, need a thorough review of the development activity of the state in both its economic and social aspects.

The House also listened to a statement by the finance minister, Basil Jardanah, in which he replied to remarks by deputies on the budget, the government's financial policies, the restructuring program, and other economic issues.

Islamists 'Jubilant' Over FIS Victory

JN2912091591 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 29 Dec 91 pp 1, 3

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter P.V. Vivekanand]

[Text] Amman—Jordan's Islamic movement, particularly the fundamentalist Muslim brotherhood, is jubilant over the sweeping victory that Islamists secured in the Algerian general elections and sees it as a forerunner of the emergence of the power of Islam through the ballot in the Arab World.

"No doubt the news of the victory of the Islamists in Algiers and the advances of the Islamic (Salvation) Front (FIS) is very positive and makes us very happy," said Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman Khalifah, spiritual leader of the Brotherhood in Jordan.

The FIS, which challenged the traditionally dominant National Liberation Front (FLN) in last Thursday's elections, bagged 167 of the 206 seats where outright majority winners were declared Friday.

Winners of the rest of the seats in the 430-strong assembly will be determined in a second round next month, pitting the two leading candidates in the first round.

"The Algerian government deserves gratitude for organising free and democratic elections that led to this happy result, which heartened all Muslims," Shaykh Khalifah told the Jordan Times.

According to Shaykh Khalifah, who guides the Brotherhood which won 22 seats in Jordan's first multiparty elections in 22 years in November 1989, the Islamic movement supports "democratic and free elections in all Arab countries."

We are also very happy that (the Islamic movement) has reached the level of governing after putting up a strong opposition and managed to secure complete freedom for all the people of Algeria," he added.

In an obvious reference to the 49 seats that the FIS needs to win an absolute majority, Shaykh Khalifah expressed confidence that "the results of the first round will be repeated in the next round and the hopes of all the rest of the FIS candidates will come true."

Shaykh Khalifah, a strong advocate of the fundamentalists' objective of an Islamic state, sidestepped a question whether the course of events in Algeria would lead to a hardening or strengthening of the position of the Brotherhood in Jordan.

"It is not a question of strength or hardening," he said. "We are all very happy that the Islamists have won in Algeria."

Ibrahim Mas'ud Khuraysat, spokesman for the Brotherhood bloc in Parliament, was quoted by Reuters as echoing the sentiments but that "we have high hopes that the rule of Islam be implemented" in Algeria, but that "we don't want the matter to be carried out in a way that creates rivalries with other parties."

Jordan was the first Arab country where the fundamentalists entered the corridors of power through free and fair elections. The Brotherhood joined the government earlier this year but stayed away from participation in a new government in June citing the group's opposition to the Middle East peace process, which the Kingdom has accepted.

Despite its absence in government, the Brotherhood remains a strong political force in Jordan and has a strong say in the various walks of life in the Kingdom.

Observers expected the movement to be buoyed by its counterpart's performance in Algeria and to press its hardline approach in parliament.

"I think the Brotherhood sees the FIS victory as a success for the fundamentalist trend in the Muslim World," said an observer, who preferred anonymity. "They (the Brotherhood) are hoping that the Algerian trend will move eastwards, and with the three Islamic power centres—Iran, Sudan and Algeria—they expect to consolidate their power."

Senior government officials as well as members of other blocs in Parliament declined comment on the Algerian elections saying it was an internal Algerian affair.

The six-member independent Islamic Bloc in the Lower House expressed satisfaction with the Algerian election results.

"It is the democratic choice of the people of Algeria," said Mutayr al-Bustanji, speaking on behalf of the bloc.

Hamas, the leading Islamic movement and a key player in the four-year-old Palestinian uprising, hailed the outcome of the Algerian elections.

"The Algerians have shown to the world that Islam is their genuine choice," said Hamas in a statement sent to Reuters.

"Your great victory has painted signs of happiness on the faces of all your mujahedeen brethren here and has given them new hope and strength," added the group.

"The victory of the Islamic movement in Algeria also represents the yearning of the Algerian people to a better life," Mr. al-Bustanji said. "Indeed it is an internal Algerian affair and we hope that the outcome of the elections will not only serve to achieve the national aspirations of the Algerian people but will also serve the interest of the Islamic Ummah [nation]," he told the Jordan Times.

Asked whether he thought the Algerian election results would have any impact on the Islamic movement in Jordan, Mr. al-Bustanji expressed the "general opinion" that "the trend that we saw in Algeria is the most visible sign of the spread of Islam and Islam's teachings as well as of the Islamic struggle in the contemporary world."

A spokesman for another hardline fundamentalist faction, the Islamic Jihad-Bayt al-Maqdis led by Shaykh As'ad Bayyud al-Tamimi, also welcomed the hold the Islamists secured in the Algerian legislature. "We congratulate our brothers and allies for this victory, which is a victory for all Muslims," the unidentified spokesman was quoted as saying by Reuters.

Deputy Muhammad Abu-'Alim—who said his comments did not represent his Constitution Bloc in the House, expressed the opinion that few parallels could be drawn between the Islamic movements in Jordan and Algeria.

"The priority and interests of the Algerians are quite different from that of the Jordanian movement," he said and pointed out to the differences in the political systems of the two countries.

"The situation of Jordanians cannot be compared with the Algerians' aspiration to justice," he said referring to the liberation that has introduced over the years.

Hostages May Be Freed in Trade for 'Clemency'

NC3012173091 Paris AFP in English 1704 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Beirut, Dec 30 (AFP)—Two German aid workers will be freed by Wednesday midnight if the family of two Lebanese Shiite militants imprisoned in Germany is given "firm guarantees of clemency," a reliable source said here Monday.

The source, who has close ties to the hostage affair, told AFP that Syria and Iran were actively working with both the kidnappers and the German Government to secure the release of Heinrich Struebig and Thomas Kemptner by the end of the year.

U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, whose envoys have been instrumental in winning the freedom of eight Western captives in Lebanon since August, has said repeatedly he wants to close the hostage file by the end of his mandate on Wednesday.

Struebig, 50, and Kemptner, 30, the last Westerners held in Lebanon, were seized in May 1989 in the southern Lebanese port of Sidon by the Mujahidin for Freedom.

The group, in exchange for the freedom of the Germans, has been demanding the release of the brothers Muhammad and 'Abbas Hammadi, imprisoned in Germany on terrorism charges.

But the source said Monday the Germans would be freed by the end of 1991 if the Hammadi family were provided "firm guarantees of clemency" for Muhammad and 'Abbas.

An Iranian envoy has been in Beirut for the past three days and has been in permanent contact with the kidnappers—considered to be close to the Hammadi family—"to convince them to make the first gesture by freeing their hostages," according to an Iranian source here.

He said Iran, "backed by Syria, wants to honor its commitments and to that end is trying to win flexibility from the Hammadi family, which has been very intransigent and is anxious to be assured on the fate of their sons before the two Germans are freed."

"At the same time Iran and Syria are trying to obtain guarantees from Bonn on clemency, especially a reduction in their sentences if not a pardon, in order to persuade the kidnappers to release the two Germans by the end of the year," the source added.

The German Government has to date ruled out an exchange of the Hammadis for Struebig and Kemptner.

Muhammad Hammadi is serving a life sentence for the 1985 hijacking of a TWA airliner during which a U.S. Navy diver was murdered in Beirut.

His brother 'Abbas was given a 13-year term in 1988 for possession of explosives and the kidnapping in Beirut of two other Germans, who were later released.

A source familiar with the hostage question said both Tehran and Syria were disappointed with the attitude of Bonn, which had reportedly agreed several months ago to an exchange following the release of the last American hostage.

The last American held in Lebanon, journalist Terry Anderson, was let go December 4.

No Multilateral Talks Without Israeli Pledges

NC3112074191 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 31 Dec 91

[Text] Economy and Trade Minister Marwan Hamadah said in Cairo that Lebanon will not attend the multilateral negotiations scheduled to be held in Moscow toward the end of January unless Israel pledges to withdraw from the south and release all the detainees held in Israeli prisons.

Russian Ambassador on Moscow Talks

NC3012163391 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Statement by Russian Ambassador Gennadiy Ilichev following a meeting today with Foreign Ministry Director General Suhayl Shammas at the Foreign Ministry—recorded]

[Text] I had the honor of visiting the Foreign Ministry, particularly His Excellency Suhayl Shammas, for the first time as the Russian Federation ambassador. We both emphasized that we will continue to consolidate and strengthen traditional relations between our two countries in all fields. We noted that there are opportunities and potential for consolidating the traditional friendship between the Russian and Lebanese peoples.

We also discussed issues concerning bilateral and multilateral talks. I told his excellency the ambassador that we believe bilateral talks are proceeding normally. It is not realistic to expect quick results because problems and issues have piled up in the Middle East and it is not possible to solve each one overnight. It is important that the parties have overcome the psychological barriers, entered into bilateral talks, and expressed readiness to continue to talk and negotiate. I could say that negotiations are proceeding normally.

I also emphasized to his excellency the ambassador that the [words indistinct] the Russian Federation is ready to arrange the organizational [tanzimi] meeting for multilateral talks in Moscow on the specified dates of 28 and 29 January. During the U.S. secretary of state's visit to the Soviet Union, when he met Russian President Boris Yeltsin, we agreed with the U.S. side that we will complete arrangements for the Moscow meeting on the specified dates. I want to seize this opportunity to wish for stability, peace, and happiness throughout Lebanon in the new year. We hope that the Lebanese people will continue the peace march and accomplish more. Happy new year.

[Unidentified correspondent] Did Ambassador Shammas inform you that Lebanon will attend the multilateral talks in Moscow?

[Ilichev] The question should not be put to me. Thank you.

Talks With Israel Expected To Resume 8 Jan

NC3012171791 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 30 Dec 91

[News conference by Ambassador Suhayl Shammas, head of the Lebanese delegation to Washington, in Beirut on 30 Dec—recorded]

[Text] [Shammas] I had the honor of meeting the prime minister on Christmas day in Tripoli, where I gave him an initial report on the talks in Washington. His excellency agreed at the time that I should visit him, along with the other members of the delegation to the Washington talks, at his office in Beirut to continue the earlier discussion. Naturally, we discussed some details with his excellency and we informed him on the talks, the atmosphere, and what we had to go through with the Israeli delegation. We apprised him fully of the Washington talks.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr. Ambassador, are you ready to resume the bilateral talks in Washington?

[Shammas] Of course we will be ready at the specified time. The Arab delegations said they were willing to be present in Washington on 7 January; we were united on this. The Israeli delegation informed us at the time that the heads of the delegation had other engagements and asked if it was possible to meet on 8 January. We said yes but that the Lebanese delegation would be ready to begin on 7 January. Thus, the Lebanese-Israeli talks are expected to be resumed on 8 January, since the United States has not informed us of any change or postponement.

[Correspondent] There was an Israeli proposal to postpone the negotiations with the Lebanese and Syrian delegations for a few weeks after 7 January.

[Shammas] I have just explained to you that we reached an understanding. If there is going to be a change in the dates, the United States will inform us. What is understood, however, is that all the Arab delegations will resume the negotiations at the same time.

[Correspondent] Could we say that the negotiations have gotten into the details or are they still over procedural matters such as the date and venue?

[Shammas] The Lebanese delegation entered into substantive negotiations, which for us means implementation of UN Resolution 425. We talked about it in detail and we will continue to do so. I believe the Syrian delegation also entered into serious negotiations. God willing, the Palestinian and Jordanian negotiations will move from the corridors into the meeting rooms, as the Arab sides wish. I would like to reemphasize an important and basic point that I mentioned yesterday, which is that any talk about progress is not based on facts or reality. The basic sign you should be looking for, for the negotiations to proceed forward in earnest, is explicit Israeli acceptance of land for peace. Then the negotiations will become serious. Before that happens, any talk about it is unrealistic. So let us wait and see.

Buwayz Interviewed on Israeli 'Prevarication'

NC3012202091 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1700 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Interview with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz by unidentified RFL correspondent on 30 December; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] Israeli radio, quoting an official source, said there is a new move to split the peace talks. The radio said the Israeli delegation will be in Washington on 8 January to start the talks with the Palestinian-Jordanian delegation, but will ask that talks with the Lebanese delegation be postponed for several weeks. How will you react if these are the Israeli delegation's real intentions?

[Buwayz] We have not received accurate information on this subject, but I am not surprised by the Israeli attempt at prevarication and delay. Everybody knows that Israel was practically forced to join this conference and that it is sparing no effort to undermine it and back out. Israel will use any excuse to achieve this end.

In any case, the Lebanese delegation will arrive as scheduled to prove its positive attitude. Before I go into this subject, I will wait and see whether the Israeli delegation will be present or not.

[Correspondent] The Israeli delegation says it will attend but will ask that the talks with the Lebanese and Syrian delegations be postponed for several weeks.

[Buwayz] It is no secret that a large number of Israeli maneuvers are related to the U.S. guarantees for funds Israel is seeking. It is no secret that the maneuvers are also connected with Shamir's attempt to avoid any progress in the peace talks. I believe that the appropriate response is for Lebanon to adhere to the schedule set in the letters and invitations and keep its positive attitude.

Cabinet Recognizes Russian Federation, Baltics

NC3112072691 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 31 Dec 91

[Text] The cabinet yesterday held its last session of the year. Prime Minister 'Umar Karami reviewed the Washington negotiations. He affirmed that the Lebanese delegation adhered to the directives concerning the unconditional implementation of Resolution 425.

The cabinet recognized the new Russian Federation and the three Baltic states.

The cabinet also approved the bill on banned military organizations and referred it to the Chamber of Deputies. It also authorized the foreign minister to participate in the Jerusalem conference in Rabat on 15 January.

The cabinet also discussed a bill designed to pay a monthly transport allowance to those workers who fall under the Social Security Law. It discussed requests to allocate funds for the Customs Department and the Economy and Trade Ministry.

Prime Minister Receives Iran's Mohajerani

NC2812171391 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Prime Minister 'Umar Karami this afternoon received 'Ata'ollah Mohajerani, Iranian deputy president for legal and parliamentary affairs. Mohajerani stressed that the resistance in Lebanon will help Lebanon achieve territorial integrity and unity.

Karami said that he and Mohajerani discussed all issues related to the liberation of Lebanese territory and Lebanon's independence and sovereignty. Mohajerani took part in the International Conference in Support of the Intifadah that was held recently at the Carlton Hotel in Beirut.

Shams-al-Din Leaves for Talks in Iran

NC3112104391 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 31 Dec 91

[Text] Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din, deputy chairman of the Higher Islamic Shiite Council, left for Tehran today after receiving a formal invitation to hold talks with senior Iranian officials over the situation in Lebanon and the region.

Junblatt Says Fight Against Regime To Continue

NC2812081791 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Progressive Socialist Party [PSP] leader Walid Junblatt has asserted that he will continue his confrontation of and preparedness to fight the fascist, privileged regime. Speaking at a ceremony honoring the sons of the martyrs, wounded, and handicapped in Bayt al-Din yesterday, Junblatt said: We and you will continue this long march. We will support you with all the resources available to us. We and you, in the PSP, the Amal Movement, Hizballah, the Social Syrian National Party, and the Communist Party—in the entire Arab patriotic movement founded by Junblatt—will continue standing on the confrontation line to resist and learn Arab principles.

He added: We sense our shortcomings when we face you and when we see the farce acted out by the regime's leaders when they give medals to each other. We also feel proud when we meet with you because you are the true Arab medal on this nation's chest.

Minister Nabih Birri said the coming battle, both within the cabinet and the Chamber of Deputies, is like two faces of the same coin and is between two generations or mentalities—the pre- and post-al-Ta'if generations. He said it is a battle between those who want rule by institution and those who want individual rule.

Politicians Call for Government To Depart

NC3012154191 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Today a new week begins, marking the end of a year during which the government praised and appreciated its own performance. So far, the people have not placed their trust in it. During the year the government was boycotted by its own ministers, criticized by its members, and governed by disagreements which are now open confrontation. Add to this the economic and social problems that burden citizens daily and which are moving with them into a new year. While the people's complaints about government shortcomings go unheard, politicians dissatisfied with current policies are raising their voices, demonstrating a real wish to change the poor political situation.

Lebanese Forces Commander Dr. Samir Ja'ja' has announced: We blame the state for many shortcomings, beginning with those in daily life, gas, gasoline and kerosene supplies, the condition of roads, schools, high prices, and corruption.

In an interview with the magazine AL-MASIRAH, Ja'ja' pointed out that government action has produced no results; a crime in itself.

Dr. Ja'ja' added that everyone is dissatisfied, noting that after 16 years of war the Lebanese people should have had relief but have not. He said that there is a general feeling that the situation is fragile and that a new war is being planned. He pointed out that the state is satisfying foreign interests instead of the people's concerns.

In an interview with Radio Free Lebanon, Housing Minister Muhammad Baydun asserted that every Lebanese citizen now opposes the clearly flawed government performance, particularly current rivalry over officials' authority. He remarked that this flawed performance can only be mended by adhering to the al-Ta'if agreement and by taking pains to implement the new Constitution.

He added that the dispute over the president's decrees, sending two bills back to parliament, is not between the Chamber of Deputies and the government. The president, he said, has a constitutional right to return bills to chamber and that the government cannot constitutionally reject his request to do so.

Baydun said: If the process of collecting light weapons is part of a comprehensive plan to implement all al-Ta'if clauses and to rebuild the state, we will support it. But if undefinable motives lie behind it, we will wait and try to rectify what we can.

Scholar Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah said that the present generation of Lebanese politicians does not possess the political morality necessary for the new Lebanon we want. He said that they retain negative aspects.

He added: Perhaps we will find that some former government figures are more noble than today's. There is no nobility in today's situation.

Hizballah Secretary General 'Abbas al-Musawi said that those who carried the second republic's good tidings now speak nostalgically about the first. He added that this regime, with all its ranks, has no right to speak about achievements when entire Lebanese areas are being neglected. Al-Musawi said that the present al-Ta'if-generated regime carries the same diseases that tore Lebanon apart.

The Ja'farite Mufti Shaykh 'Abd-al-Amir Qabalan urged the government to leave, saying: May God not forgive this government. It must leave in favor of a smaller goverment which will show mercy to the people and serve the country.

Ja'ja' Denounces Explosion; Government 'Failure'

NC3012181191 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1645 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Lebanese Forces Commander Dr. Samir Ja'ja' has strongly denounced the incident that hit innocent victims—women, children, and men—and left destruction in the center of the capital. He said that this explosion is an attempt to assassinate the march of peace in Lebanon and to return to the whirlpool of violence, especially as it is part of a series of criminal incidents, including the explosion at the American University and the assassination of [Lebanese Forces] martyr Captain Sulayman 'Aqiqi.

Ja'ja' said these and other security incidents over a brief period of time indicate the government's utter failure to control the security situation, though this is what most government officials brag about. The government's weakness in security has been exposed. Its achievements have become a farce in front of the tears of the widows, the moans of the wounded, and the limbs of the innocent victims. The magnitutude of this disaster has exposed the government's failure in all fields.

Ja'ja' conveyed condolences to the families of the victims and wished the wounded quick recovery. He begged God to show officials the righteous course.

Egyptians Forming 'Fundamentalist Network' Seized

NC3112121191 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 31 Dec 91

[Text] According to security sources, security forces have seized a fundamentalist network still in the formative stage from among a number of Egyptians who had illegally entered Lebanon.

Those arrested have been referred to court on charges of illegal entry into the country.

Intifadah Conference Issues Concluding Statement

NC2712222691 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] In Beirut, the meetings of the Third International Conference in Support of the Intifadah in Palestine ended with a concluding statement announced by the follow-up committee. The statement contained a number of decisions, the most important of which were to reject all settlement projects, which will lead to recognizing the legitimate existence of the Zionist entity on Palestinian territory, and the affirmation that the Zionist entity is a fake and illegal entity.

The conference told the ulemas of the nation to prohibit [tahrim] the conceding of any part of Palestinian territory because it is part of the home of Islam. The conference's final statement also considered all negotiations and bartering with the Zionist enemy currently taking place to be of no concern to the Muslim and Arab peoples. The statement asked the Muslim and patriotic sides that reject the settlement projects in the region, especially those parties that signed the Tehran Statement, to formulate their political program for supporting and protecting the intifadah.

The conference condemned the decision to revoke the resolution equating Zionism with racism. It questioned U.S. frankness about the resolution and its attempts to impose hegemony and control on the region. The conference also condemned U.S. and British threats to the Libyan people. It called for greater solidarity between the Islamic republic in Iran and the Syrian Arab Republic to confront the pressure and blackmail the United States uses against the Muslims.

The conference condemned the indiscriminate Zionist methods against the Palestinian and Lebanese detainees and prisoners. It saluted the two detained shaykhs, Ahmad Yasin and 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd. It called for action to be taken to release the prisoners and detainees as soon as possible. The Conference in Support of the Intifadah also decided to set up an information center to take care of arbitration issues in the Palestinian arena and publish books on this subject, as well as to concentrate media on the inevitable end of the usurping entity and to finalize the message of the Third Conference in Support of the Intifadah.

On the economic level, the conference decided to set up a fund to be financed by Islamic countries and nations to help the Palestinian people and to exert efforts to issue legal licenses for using parts of alms to support the Islamic intifadah in Palestine and the social, medical, and charity organizations that provide the struggling Palestinian people with services.

The statement concluded by saluting the Islamic intifadah's sons, martyrs, and detainees, and by hailing with pride and dignity the national and Islamic resistance men in southern Lebanon and the western al-Biqa'.

Assembly Approves Bill on War Contribution

JN3112144891 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 31 Dec 91

[Excerpt] The People's Assembly held a meeting at 1000 today chaired by Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah. The session was attended by Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi and a number of other ministers.

At the outset of the meeting, written questions submitted by Assembly members were read aloud and then referred to the competent authorities through the prime minister.

The Assembly then discussed the financial committee's report on the bill earmarking the extent of financial contribution that will be made to support the war effort until 31 December 1992. A number of Assembly members spoke at the meeting, stressing that this contribution is a modest national duty in comparison with the sacrifices of our people and Army. They have sacrificed the dearest thing they have for the sake of liberation and attaining victory under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad.

The Assembly approved the report and the bill as it was presented.

Assembly Speaker Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah then spoke. He thanked the members for the good and relentless efforts which they had exerted during this session, emphasizing that it had been a big and great working session of which our people and Assembly are proud. It included the nomination of militant President Hafiz al-Asad for a new presidential term. Our good people have pledged allegiance to the leader of this nation's march. [passage omitted]

Press on 'Intransigent' Israeli Statements

JN2912085991 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 29 Dec 91

[From the press review]

[Text] In its editorial, the newspaper TISHRIN comments on the obstacles laid by the Shamir government in the way of establishing a just and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Zionist conflict.

The paper says: Instead of facilitating the international endeavors, the Shamir government is planning to torpedo the whole process, and to render the Middle East situation explosive.

To corroborate this argument, TISHRIN cites the recent move made by the Shamir government to arm settlers and authorize them to attack Arab citizens, set their houses and property ablaze, and destroy their agricultural produce. The paper notes that this government has also persisted in expanding settlements. It is now preparing to implement new plans in the occupied territories aimed, among other things, at settling 350,000 Jewish immigrants. By so doing, the paper says, this government would put before the whole world a fait accompli.

The paper adds: In the meantime, Israeli negotiators to the peace talks pursued an approach based on procrastination, prevarication, and refusal to discuss substantive issues. Moreover, they evaded the implementation of international resolutions and meeting the requirements of a just and comprehensive settlement.

TISHRIN also touches on the January talks, saying: These talks will be decisive, in that they will show whether the peace process will continue or not. If they persist in the policy of procrastination and prevarication, the Israelis would then deal a heavy blow to the hopes pinned on ending the whirlpool of wars and conflicts in the Middle East.

For its part, the newspaper AL-THAWRAH comments on the same issue, saying: The Israeli stands and conduct show that the Tel Aviv rulers will not entertain the idea of abandoning their practices and approaches, which are meant to obstruct peace efforts and prevent the attainment of any progress toward a just and comprehensive solution. Shamir, Sharon, Levi, Arens, and other symbols of hardline positions and terrorism who make up the Likud cabinet have been deliberately making provocative and intransigent statements, showing enmity to peace and rejection of its requirements. These statements denote strong defiance of the world community and disregard for its laws and resolutions.

Muslim Brotherhood Welcomes Prisoner Release

JN2612111991 Amman AL-RIBAT in Arabic 24 Dec 91 p 1

[Text] Syrian Interior Minister Muhammad Harbah told the Syrian news agency, SANA, that 2,864 people convicted of anti-state security acts have been pardoned. "They will be released soon," Harbah said.

According to a report by human rights activists, there are 10,000 political prisoners in Syria. Some 7,000 of these are charged with affiliation to the Muslim Brotherhood and 1,000 with pan-Arab and leftist groups. There are also 1,000 followers of Salah Jadid [prominent Ba'th leader] and 450 members of the Labor Party.

Harbah would not reveal the nationalities of the beneficiaries. Observers expect the majority of those released to have a religious connection.

Against the backdrop of this move, the chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood Political Bureau in Syria has stated the following:

The release of a group of political detainees in Syria is a positive step. If followed by similar steps, it will constitute a ground for new and natural relations in our beloved country, Syria—relations based on true shura, political pluralism, and public liberties. Then all national capabilities can be mobilized to build the homeland and to wage the real struggle against the enemy, which is lying in wait for the Arab and Islamic nation. Past mistakes then can be avoided and a free, dignified life will be resumed, God willing.

Afghanistan

Najibollah Meets Armed Forces Commanders 24 Dec

LD2512091891 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0517 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Text] Kabul, Dec. 24, BAKHTAR—Najibollah, president and high commander of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan today had a meeting with the leading bodies of the Armed Forces ministries, commanders and in charges of the education departments of the detachments of the Afghan Army, reports BAKHTAR.

President Najibollah while appreciating the active participation of the armed forces of the country in rebuffing the enemies' attacks and thwarting their sinister designs, said that the armed forces of the country, despite the existing shortcomings and [words indistinct] posed by foreigners on our country, have bravely defended the independence, territorial integrity and national sovereignty of the country and will do so in the future.

President Najibollah while shedding light on the current politico-military developments in Afghanistan, said that under the prevailing condition, when all-out efforts at different levels are going on for the political settlement of the Afghan issue, the enemies of our people and that of our country and the Pakistani military circles have not given-up the hope of military solution, and by creating [words indistinct] on the peaceful solution of the Afghan conflict, are insisting on the military settlement. They have intensified their aggressive [words indistinct] against the territory of our country in elaboration with the armed extremist groups.

He added that the government of Afghanistan [word indistinct] on God the Almighty and all-out support of the people have emerged successful from these difficulties, and with firm believe in the policy of national reconciliation, have left behind this hardships, and via intra-Afghan dialogue which is the [words indistinct] aspiration of the Afghan people will achieve country-wide peace and tranquility in the future.

The state of the Republic of Afghanistan in this connection by taking into account the national interest and by realising the realities of the country, have harmonised its deeds, and goals in the international developments, stressed President Najibollah.

President Najibollah added that the armed forces of the country with their monolith discipline and high combat preparedness, have annulled the intrigues of the enemies at different levels and have faced them with consequent defeats, which have [word indistinct] the political and moral credibility of the government of Afghanistan, both at national and international levels.

President Najibollah in a part of his speech said, now military confrontations have been [words indistinct] and the military doctrine have possessed defensive characteristics all-over the world.

President Najibollah pointed out that the history of Afghanistan involved the very relaity that whenever the popular forces have mobilised for defending the country, they have scored tremendous successes and have brought to knees the biggest powers of the world.

At the end Raz Muhammad Paktin minister of interior, on behalf of others, while speaking on the combat preparedness of the Armed Forces of the country, pledged [words indistinct] sacrifices for defending the country and implementing the policy of national reconciliation.

Najibollah Decree Releases 100 Prisoners

LD2812223491 Kabul BAKHTAR in Dari 1130 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Kabul, 28 Dec (BAKHTAR)—The presidential press office reported that the following decree by esteemed Najibollah, president of Afghanistan, was issued on the release of 100 prisoners who were convicted of committing crimes against the internal and external security of the Republic of Afghanistan:

In the light of the humanitarian policy of national reconciliation and in view of the realization of this policy, while the lofty Islamic and Afghan principles and humanitarian considerations are the guideline for the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan, and the Afghan Government has taken many major steps since the proclamation of the policy of national reconciliation for the release of the prisoners, I hereby again approve the following steps that conform to the five-point plan of his excellency the UN secretary general, and in order to increase understanding between Afghans and to achieve intra-Afghan understanding and in order to demonstrate the goodwill of the Afghan Government:

I have pardoned the remaining jail terms of 100 prisoners convicted of committing crimes against internal and external security. Their names are included in the attached list, and therefore, they should be released from jail.

The national interests of the Afghans require that the opposition forces, in particular the forces supporting political solution, perceive with goodwill this humanitarian, Islamic, and Afghan action by the Republic of Afghanistan and to reciprocate this action by releasing POWs.

[Signed] Najibollah, president of Afghanistan

Russian Delegation Meets Council Chairman

LD2512084791 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0455 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] Kabul, Dec. 23, BAKHTAR—Farid Zarif, chairman of the Economic Consultative Council of the Council of Ministers of Afghanistan met Vladimir Belkin, chairman of the financial and economic firm "Fund Rasta Khaiz" of the Russian Federation and Khaim Emanovilov, chairman of the productive and Economic Monetary Fund of the said Republic who are heading a highranking Russian delegation and arrived recently to Kabul, in Kabul Intercontinental Hotel, today, reports BAKHTAR.

During the meeting, while 'Abdurrahman Ahmadzai, chairman of the Afghan Chamber of Commerce and a number of private entrepreneurs were also present, they talked and exchanged views on mutual economic cooperation and commercial exchanges between the private sectors of the two countries and seeking of new ways in the field including the establishment of joint productive and commercial ventures between the two republics.

The sides expressed their full readiness for the further expansion of mutual and economic cooperation and exchange of commercial goods between the two countries. The sides agreed that in the near future, special delegations, to this aim, will be exchanged between the two republics.

Uzbek Economic Delegation Meets Balkh Governor

LD3012100291 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0447 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Kabul, Dec 29, BAKHTAR—Engineer Mohammad 'Aziz governor of the Balkh Province, north of Afghanistan, while a number of private entrepreneurs were present met an economic and trade delegation of the Surkhandar'ya Province of the Republic of Uzbekistan, in Mazar-e Sharif today aimed at the betterment of the export items of the Afghani export goods.

A BAKHTAR reporter from the Mazar-e Sharif city reported during the meeting the sides exchanged views on the present-day friendly relations existed between the peoples of the two republics in the economic and cultural fields, and decided that to provide much facilities for the export affairs and preventions of extra expenditures on the packing affairs of the export goods, which was done in Hiratan city earlier, henceforth will be done in the Mazar-e Sharif city.

A 70-member Uzbek delegation arrived on Thursday to the Mazar city and went on Friday to the Howzrat-e 'Ali "the 4th caliph of Islam" shrine and paid homage to his soul. Its the first an Uzbek delegation visiting Afghanistan in the past seven decades.

Mines Ministry Signs Protocol With PRC

LD2412101891 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Excerpts] Documents on to technical and economic cooperation were signed today between the Ministry of Mines and Industries and the National Construction Company of Establishments of the People's Republic of China in the corresponding ministry. [passage omitted]

The documents contain technical and economic information on studies for the construction of 11 industrial projects and on the primary stages for strengthening economic relations and technical cooperation between the ministry and the company.

Committee Discusses Replacing Poppy Cultivation

LD3012101691 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0429 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Kabul, Dec 29, BAKHTAR—The periodic session of the planning affairs committee of the replacement of poppy cultivation with cereals was held on Saturday chaired by Mohammad Hassan Payman, deputy agriculture minister, participated by Mohammad Zahir Atal, secretary of the state high-commission struggles against production, smuggling and use of narcotics, held at the headquarters of that ministry on Dec 28, reports a BAKHTAR correspondent. The session, when Asil Khan deputy minister of planning affairs was also present, discussed different matter regarding to the replacement of poppy cultivation, collection of data from provinces of the country in this regard and evaluation of economic situation. It adopted necessary measures in the sphere.

Report says, the aims and program of the state-high commission struggles against production smuggling and use of drug abuse were explained in a methodic seminar participated by supervisers, inspectors and executive boards of training and education sphere held in Kabul on Saturday. In the seminar, M. Zahir Atal secretary of the commission talked about the work, duties and activities of that commission, as well as need of intensification of struggle against narcotics. He appealed to the participants of the seminar and employees of the education field to intensify struggle against narcotics.

Bangladesh

Muslim Leader Condemns Burmese 'Atrocities'

BK2612090491 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0130 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] The Rohingya Solidarity Organization has condemned Myanmar [Burma] for attack on a BDR [Bangladesh Rifles] camp inside Bangladeshi territory and killing of one jawan [soldier] and injuring seven others on Saturday [21 December] last. The president of the organization, Dr. (Mohammad Yunus), in a statement in Chittagong yesterday said the attack was motivated by

[words indistinct]. He said there have been heavy concentration of Myanmar troops and military weapons along the border of the two countries since the last (?two) months, creating an alarming situation there. Dr. (Yunus) called on Bangladeshi Government to support the cause of 2 million Rohingya Muslims. He drew the attention of the international community to the atrocities being launched by the Myanmar junta against the Arakanese Muslims.

Trade Memorandum With PRC Signed in Dhaka

BK2812091491 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0130 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] China will explore the possibilities of manufacturing and assembling industrial sewing machines in Bangladesh. A memorandum of understanding to this effect was signed in Dhaka last night between the visiting (Wangjou) Friendship and Trade delegation and Bangladesh International Cultural Exchange Center. According to the agreement, a Chinese commodity trade fair will be held in Dhaka next year and the proposed trade in electrical appliances will be negotiated through further correspondence.

The two sides also agreed that a Bangladesh friendship and cultural delegation would visit China in 1992 and the Chinese delegation would visit Bangladesh in 1993.

Note Signed With Japan To Provide Debt Relief

BK2612165291 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] Bangladesh will receive from Japan debt relief grant assistance of about 198 crore taka under two separate exchange of notes signed in Dhaka today. The present debt relief grant is the (?fourteenth) of this kind. The grant is the support towards the balance of payment and will be utilized by Bangladesh for import of essential industrial raw materials, machinery and [word indistinct] under the import policy of the govenment. Japanese Ambassador Toshio Saiki and ARD [Agriculture and Rural Development] Additional Secretary Dr. Shaukath Ali signed the notes.

Aid To Total $55 Million

BK2712155791 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] The Japanese Government has decided to provide 5 crore 50 lakh dollars as grant-in-aid to Bangladesh. Officials in Tokyo today said the assistance will be used for economic development and other projects as well as to improve the people's welfare.

India

Former Foreign Minister on Gorbachev Resignation

BK2612053091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Commentary by I.K. Gujral, former external affairs minister: "Analysis of Gorbachev's Resignation"]

[Text] The legend of Gorbachev has dipped. His stepping down has ended the role of a leader with colossal dimensions. Singlehandedly he changed the course of world history. Even with the curtain drawing over his remarkable career, the magic of his three words—glasnost, perestroyka, and democracy—will continue to kindle the minds and thoughts of the people in vast lands, or what was once called the Soviet Union.

Glasnost has opened the minds of the people and released their tremendous energies, but it has also generated tremendous pressures. People are no more willing to put up with acute shortages and long queues in the wintry months. His perestroyka has ended the ideology-based economy, but concepts and organizations of the market will take long to get operative. In the meantime, everything has broken down.

The Yeltsin-led new order, too, will face this reality. He has no magic words to remedy the situation either. The second revolution of one sixth of the world has finally ended the communist era and (?disinterred) the tsarist empire that communists had tried to keep together. They had kept a firm lid on all pressures of nationalism and religious fervor. All these have now returned home to roost.

Gorbachev failed to comprehend the upsurge of nationalism in the Soviet Union. This failure cost him his office and gave Yeltsin an opportunity to humiliate him in public. But, as things are, the 11 may not be able to smoothly settle their respective claims against the erstwhile Soviet Union or work out a unified economic system.

Gorbachev has also cautioned his successors regarding the world's largest army that has so far silently watched the goings-on, but their anxieties and nervousness regarding their own future need not be underestimated.

With soaring inflation and sharp decline in production and exports, the commonwealth of new states may not be able to safeguard their states and pay their salaries and allowances despite all the promises made by Mr. Yeltsin.

Mr. Baker, the American secretary of state, has commented on the endurability of the commonwealth and the possibility of social unrest in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and industrial cities in the Urals. What is equally uncertain is if a common defense policy of single-point control of the nuclear arms can be evolved and sustained.

Mr. Gorbachev, on his last day, has said that perhaps he had made mistakes in pushing hard toward a more open

society with free market economy. Maybe it was so, but the hard realities of the defeat in the cold war hardly left him a choice. He may not have failed so miserably if the G-7 had come to his rescue on the pattern of the Marshal Plan in the post-World War II era, but it was not to be. The Western powers wanted a complete and irreversible dismantling of the communist order. They are equally to inhibit the reemergence of any mighty power in this region. For this, dismemberment of the Soviet Union was acceptable and it serves their purpose.

The removal from power of a hero is always a painful sight. Mr. Yeltsin's conduct toward his senior comrade and a one-time friend lacked dignity and smacked of revenge.

Commentary Examines End of Soviet Union

BK2612115491 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Commentary by special correspondent Om Narain: "Soviet Union out of the World Map"]

[Text] With the resignation of Mikhail Gorbachev, one of the superpowers—the Soviet Union—has been obliterated officially from the map of the world. Mr. Gorbachev, who presided over the Soviet Union for seven years, can easily be reckoned as one of the greatest personalities of the 20th century. He dominated the international political arena from 1985-1991. Although he ushered in a revolution with his perestroyka, meaning restructuring, and glasnost, meaning openness, throughout Europe, eliminating all traces of Communism, he fell a victim to these theories in his own country. And he made an attempt to grant more liberalization to the various republics constituting the union.

There is no doubt that Soviet socialism has been replaced by a more democratic process in various republics of the former Soviet Union. Almost all the states, including the largest, Russia, have declared themselves as independent and have rejected Mr. Gorbachev's proposal for a common defense and economic base to keep the country from disintegration. After declaring themselves as independent, the republics chose Mr. Boris Yeltsin as their leader. Mr. Yeltsin is the president of the largest republic of Russia. The Russian flag has replaced the Soviet flag at the Kremlin and Mr. Yeltsin has been authorized by the 11 independent republics to deal with other countries and represent the commonwealth at all international forums.

The prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, has clarified that India's policy toward the Russian state had not undergone any fundamental change, but the country will have to deal with the commonwealth whose representatives will be visiting New Delhi. In New Delhi, the Soviet hammer and sickle flag was replaced by the Russian tricolor flag a few days ago.

In his farewell address before formally tendering his resignation, Mr. Gorbachev said he would continue to work for the betterment of the people of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] as long as he could. He handed over the nuclear key button to Mr. Yeltsin, as Russia and three other republics possess about 30,000 warheads.

It is still to be seen how the United Nations looks at the new and sudden developments because, instead of one country called the Soviet Union, there are 15 independent republics. These republics will have to apply for the membership of the world body separately, and until the time they are admitted they will have to remain without the UN membership.

Although in the opinion of Mr. Gorbachev and Mr. Bush, the Commonwealth of Independent Republics will not be a successful experiment, Mr. Gorbachev would continue to extend his cooperation and wealth of experience to the new setup of Mr. Yeltsin. These developments have attracted mixed reaction from world leaders. While China has outright condemned Mr. Gorbachev and made him solely responsible for destroying the Soviet Union by his perestroyka and glasnost, the West has generally welcomed the liberalization trend. Mr. Gorbachev has created a niche in history of the world as one of the most outstanding leaders of the country, notwithstanding his failure to keep the country together and ending the existence of one of the most potent and influential superpowers.

Soviet republics on Saturday [21 December] had signed the historic protocol forming a CIS, proclaiming the once-mighty Soviet Union dead and giving their share the UN Security Council seat.

The momentous decision taken at the Kazakhstan Alma-Ata has left Mikhail Gorbachev president of a country that does not exist. The leaders of the 11 republics had decided there was no role for Gorbachev in the commonwealth by even taking away the only power and job he still had by naming incumbent Soviet Defense Minister Shaposhnikov commander in chief of the armed forces, pending a final decision on the structure of the Army. They had however assured Gorbachev financial and other facilities needed for his wellbeing after he resigned. The 11 republics are Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, the Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. The twelfth republic Georgia sent observers and would decide later on joining the commonwealth. The three Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia did not attend the meeting. Presidents Yeltsin of Russia, Kravchuk of Ukraine and Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan and Belarus's legislature chairman Stanislav Shushkevich are to sign a separate agreement on unified control of strategic forces, including nuclear weapons.

Official on Recognition of Russia, Republics

BK3112101491 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 0919 GMT 31 Dec 91

[Text] The Foreign Secretary [FS] made following statement to the press at 1900 hrs [hours] (26/12/91) on formal recognition of all the republics constituting the USSR:

In continuation of what the External Affairs Minister [EAM] had anticipated in a statement on 23 December, 91, the PM [prime minister] and EAM, after reviewing developments have decided to accord formal recognition to the Russian Federation and to all other republics.

(On being asked, the FS clarified that due political processes had been completed). Communications are in the process of being sent to the presidents of these republics from our prime minister. It has also been decided to establish diplomatic missions in the near future in some of these republics. Government has taken note of the fact that the Russian Federation has assumed the role of successor state as implied in its taking over the seat of the Soviet Union in the UN Security Council.

The concerned departments of the Government of India are in the final stage of drawing up proposals for restructuring economic, defence, commercial and technological interaction with these republics. We have been in touch with the Russian ambassador in India and have been informed that on its side, the Russian Federation has set up working groups to prepare proposals which after cumeshing withouts, would lay the basis of our new relations. We hope to send and receive delegations to these republics in the coming two months to work out details and make arrangements to see that relations continue smoothly in terms of supplies, commercial interactions, financial arrangements and so on.

In response to a question regarding opening of diplomatic missions, the FS clarified that while we had already an embassy in Moscow, we hope to open embassies in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus, and upgrade our CG [Consulate General] in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. For the moment, concurrent accreditation is planned from these five missions to other republics. We also hope to open consulates/consulates-general in Valdivostok and St. Petersburg.

In response to a question, the FS also stated that he was informed that the prime minister would be sending an appropriate message to former President Gorbachev.

To another question on the statement attributed to Russian Vice President Rutskoy on Kashmir during his recent visit to Pakistan, the FS stated that we had taken up the matter with the Russian authorities and had been informed that perhaps he was not fully briefed on the Russian position. We understand that the position would be rectified.

Ambassadors to Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia Named

BK2412152391 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] Mr. Jagannath Dodamani, India's ambassador to Poland, has been concurrently accredited to Lithuania. An External Affairs Ministry spokesman told newsmen in New Delhi that Mr. Dodamani has presented his credentials to the Lithuanian president. Lithuania, a Baltic state, broke away from the erstwhile Soviet Union in September. New Delhi has already named its ambassadors to Finland and Sweden to be the envoys of the other two Baltic states of Latvia and Estonia.

Communist Party Blames Gorbachev for 'Collapse'

BK2612133591 Hong Kong AFP in English 1302 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] New Delhi, Dec 26 (AFP)—India's most powerful communist party said Thursday that Mikhail Gorbachev had only himself to blame for his fall and predicted that Russian President Boris Yeltsin would meet a similar fate.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI (M)] said Gorbachev's exit and the collapse of the once-mighty Soviet empire were "the logical culmination" of the policies followed by the former Soviet leader.

"This historically retrogade development was not totally unexpected given the disastrous policies launched in the last few years... particularly by Gorbachev," the CPI (M) said in a statement here.

"He (Gorbachev) must take the responsibility for the dismantling of the Soviet Union," party leader Harkishen Singh Surjeet told reporters. "People are getting fed up with Yeltsin too. He will go in the same manner."

The statement hoped that Soviet communists "would in the years to come rally together in future struggle and join the ranks of the world-wide forces that fight for the cause of democracy, freedom and socialism."

Surjeet, a Politburo member who is widely expected to be elected general secretary of the CPI (M) next month, added: "Socialism is going to stay. Nobody can stop the march of Marxist-Leninism."

The CPI (M), which since its birth in 1964 has been independent of both Moscow and Beijing, had since 1988 repeatedly attacked Gorbachev's policies and warned that it would lead to the Soviet Union's breakup. It has governed the eastern Indian state of West Bengal since 1977, and wields influence in some other areas of the country.

PRC To Cooperate in Petrochemicals Sector

BK2612102291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0930 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] India and China have agreed to cooperate in the fields of chemicals and petrochemicals. Both the countries have also agreed to identify areas of cooperation in information on chemicals, technology transfer, training, research and development, and trade of chemicals and fertilizers between them. This was decided in a meeting when a six-member Chinese delegation called on the minister of state for chemicals and fertilizers, Dr. Chintamohan, in New Delhi today. Dr. Chintamohan informed the Chinese delegation about the development and capabilities of India's chemicals and petrochemicals sectors.

Editorial on India-PRC Joint Communique

BK2912132791 Delhi PATRIOT in English 18 Dec 91 p 4

[Editorial: "India, China, Pakistan"]

[Text] There certainly is need to evaluate whether the emphasis in the Sino-Indian joint communique on the need for an early settlement of the border dispute can be taken to mean that a comprehensive settlement can be expected within a short time-frame. But this cannot be the only or even the primary reason for the restraint being exercised in official circles in assessing the outcome of the talks of Prime Minister Li Peng and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen during their six-day stay in New Delhi. Authoritative circles say that the record of these talks shows that they were profuse with assurances that they would convey India's concern over Pakistan-sponsored terrorism in Punjab and Kashmir to their counter-parts in Islamabad. Mr Li was quite specific about this point when he met Defence Minister Sharad Pawar. But while drafting the joint communique along with Indian officials, the Chinese team did not want to incorporate in it the assurances given by their Prime Minister. They did not agree, one is informed, even to the inclusion of Chinese disapproval of terrorism, whatever its source. The reason can be that they did not want to ruffle Pakistani feelings, and although Mr Li had said: "Pakistan is our friend, now we are promoting friendship with India", or words to this effect, it seems that China is yet to find the right equilibrium in its relations with India and Pakistan. It is also possible that in view of the power struggle in China Mr Li did not want to commit himself to a position which is not wholly supported by the elders whose patronage he enjoys. It may be mentioned that during the negotiations for finalising Mr Li's New Delhi programme, the Chinese President found it necessary to pay an unscheduled visit to Pakistan and Iran in the midst of reports in world media that Islamabad was brokering a tie-up between Beijing and Tehran. Whatever may be the reason for Chinese team's lack of concern to Indian sensitivity to terrorism, it has been a damper on the optimism of Indian officials about the outcome of the Li Peng visit. Also, while negotiating the Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Science of the Indian Government and the Ministry of Aerospace in the Chinese Government on peaceful applications of space, science and technologies, the Chinese officials were so keen to avoid any expression, theoretical or descriptive, which might attract the provisions of the US-sponsored missile technology control regime (MTCR) and thus annoy the Americans that they had to sit overnight to finalise the draft. This anxiety lends a new meaning to the brave talk of the Chinese team against the emergence of what they described as oligarchies (in plural) after the end of the cold war. Many in diplomatic circles wonder whether they were referring to the US or Japan, or the G-7. India's leaders were more straightforward. Their references to the unipolarity plainly identified the power-centre wielding untrammelled global power. But then China's Deng leadership is known for its pragmatism. When relations with China show signs of normalcy, one would like to avoid the other word for pragmatism which is used only when one does not want to be discreet about what one says.

Delhi Sees 'Nothing New' in Pakistan Proposal

BK3012160991 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] The spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry has said that there is nothing new in the Pakistan prime minister's proposal to start a dialogue at a political level to sort out Kashmir and other problems. He was responding to a query on a newspaper interview given by Mr. Nawaz Sharif. The spokesman pointed out that Islamabad continues to hold the same stance on Kashmir as it did in 1947.

The spokesman said no dialogue can be held in a vacuum irrespective of the level at which it is proposed. India, he said, is willing to engage in a dialogue with Pakistan and will be happy to continue and strengthen the ongoing talks at various levels for finding a solution to outstanding problems.

Antitank Missile Successfully Flight Tested

BK2712081091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] The country's third generation antitank missile Nag has been successfuly flight tested at Chandipur in Orissa. The director of the Defense Research and Development Laboratories, Dr. Abdul Kalam, said in Hyderabad that the flight has met all machine requirements.

India is the third country in the world to flight test the antibattle tank missile.

Iran

Swiss Embassy Closure Termed 'Hasty Reaction'

LD3012180891 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in Persian 1615 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] The Swiss Embassy in Tehran has been closed down. Announcing this, the Swiss Foreign Ministry further revealed that the diplomatic post will remain closed until further notice.

Meanwhile an Iranian Foreign Ministry official commented on the measure, calling it a hasty reaction against a simple technical issue. A Swiss Embassy employee, who was to leave Iran for his country on Sunday, failed to take his flight because he neglected to present his passport in time.

Swiss 'Warned' by Daily

LD3112103591 Tehran IRNA in English 0909 GMT 31 Dec 91

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 31, IRNA—A morning daily Tuesday warned the Swiss Government not to turn France's problem in failing to identify those involved in last August murder of the last Prime Minister of the former regime Shahpur Bakhtiar in Paris "into her own problem."

JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in a political commentary was referring to the diplomatic row between Tehran and Bern flared last Monday when the Swiss police arrested a staffer of the Iranian Embassy in Bern in connection with Bakhtiar's assassination.

The Swiss Embassy in Tehran has been closed until further notice allegedly due to increasing pressure on the embassy staffers. "It would be wise for Swiss Government not to be deceived by the vicious propaganda of terrorist groups or other countries which intend to settle their problems through others." Since the stabbing to death of Bakhtiar five months ago the French police has found no single trace of the murderers, therefore, Bern's accusations against a staffer of the embassy is questionable. "Obviously each country enjoys freedom in its relations with others and Switzerland is no exception. But, since the first step in this connection has been taken by Bern, the next measure determining bilateral relations will depend on Tehran." Advising the Swiss statesmen to exercise vigilance, the paper noted: "Tomorrow, when Bern realizes the political mistake it has made in relations with Tehran, it will have to respect the will of the Iranian nation and Government in improving bilateral relations." The Swiss Embassy representing Washington's interests section in Iran ever since the two countries broke ties in 1979 has seen America's overt and covert attempts to resume diplomatic ties with Iran. But the Islamic Republic will not establish relations with a country which does not cease its hostility and wickedness, the daily concluded.

Foreign Ministry Summons Saudi Envoy Over Insult

LD3012172891 Tehran IRNA in English 1537 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 30, IRNA—The Islamic Republic of Iran today warned the Wahhabis of Saudi Arabia against publishing books and literature which serve only to divide the Muslim ummah. The Foreign Ministry summoned Saudi charge d'affaires in Tehran, Badr 'Uthman Bakhsh, and protested all acts of insult against Islam, calling on him to immediately make good on what has been done in Saudi Arabia.

Director General of the Persian Gulf Affairs Department of the Foreign Ministry Hojjat ol-Eslam Mostafa Fumani Ha'eri Monday emphasized to 'Uthman Bakhsh on the significance of improving relations with Saudi Arabia, expressing hope that good judgement, tactfulness and mature insight will always dictate the relations between Tehran and Riyadh. The charge d'affaires of Saudi Arabia, in turn, promised to convey the feelings of the Iranian Foreign Ministry to his government.

Iraqi Envoy Summoned on Assassination Attempt

LD3112111291 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 31 Dec 91

[Text] Following the assassination attempt on one of the Islamic Republic of Iran's diplomats in Baghdad last night, the Foreign Ministry director general for Persian Gulf affairs summoned the Iraqi charge d'affaires in Tehran to the Ministry and submitted a formal note, identifying those who planned and carried out the assassination attempt on the Iranian diplomat in Baghdad and giving their full specifications, and asking that they be extradited to Iran. A group of the Monafeqin, who are supported by Iraq, last week attacked two of the Islamic Republic of Iran's diplomats in Baghdad, severely beating them, and fired a bullet at Mr. Javad Pakayin, severely injuring him.

IRNA Views Assassination Attempt by MKO

LD2912004591 Tehran IRNA in English 1530 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 28, IRNA—Iranian diplomat in Baghdad Javad Pakayin was shot at and injured on December 23 by members of the outlawed Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization (MKO), better known in Iran as the "monafeqin" (hypocrites). The full import of the attempt against his life would be understood only within the context of the current wave of return to Iran of self-reformed members of the MKO in Iraq.

The assassination attempt was an obvious move by the MKO to prevent the return to Iran of a group of penitents who seem to have abandoned the violence preached by their outfit in the gradual process of disillusionment. Groups of self-reformed outlaws recently returned to Iran and offered shocking accounts of the

activities of the MKO in Iraq and of the outfit's frustration with the present state of affairs.

The assassination attempt by the MKO entailed sharp protest by Iran, which has demanded the extradition to Iran of the elements responsible for the shooting of the Iranian diplomat.

Repentant outlaws who have returned to Iran from Iraq say the outfit is fast losing its membership and that dissenters have been imprisoned while others survive in desert camps under adverse conditions in Ramadiyah northwest of Baghdad.

Iraq and Jordan have arrested hundreds of MKO members trying to flee Iraq, and have returned them to the group leaders. The arrested former outlaws now spend prison terms in Ramadiyah.

Israel, too, has warned the MKO members that in the event they should jump the border to Israel via Jordan they will be fired at by the Zionist soldiers, or arrested and returned to Iraq.

Since the MKO leadership has virtually blocked every possible escape route for dissenters, the frustrated MKO members have opted to return home as the only haven still open to them.

The affectionate behaviour with self-reformed MKO members by the Iranian diplomats in Iraq and the help offered them by the Iranian Embassy in Baghdad for returning safely to Iran has extremely worried the leaders of the terrorist outfit.

In light of the recent developments, therefore, the assassination attempt may well be interpreted as a device by the MKO leadership to hinder the return to Iran of those members who have given up their partisan commitment as a result of a long process of disillusionment.

President Chairs SNSC Session on Reparations

LD2912092191 Tehran IRNA in English 1832 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 28, IRNA—Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) on Saturday reviewed the report of the United Nations Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar on war-related damage to Iran during the eight year Iraqi aggression (1980-88).

Perez de Cuellar said in a report to the Security Council earlier this week that Iran had incurred dollars 97,200 million in direct war damage. The National Security Council of Iran appreciated the efforts of the U.N. chief, noting that the volume of true damage, including unaccountable damage is exceedingly high.

SNSC voiced the need for speeding up action for collecting damages by means of international channels.

It also reflected on the attempt against the life of two Iranian diplomats in Baghdad Monday demanding that Iraq surrender the Iranian attackers to the Islamic Republic.

Last Monday members of the outlawed Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization (MKO), better known in Iran as 'monafeqin' (hypocrites), opened fire on two Iranian diplomats in Baghdad injuring one of them seriously and severely beating the other.

The meeting of the Supreme National Security Council here Saturday was presided by President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Vahaji Returns After Meeting Lebanese President

LD3012084891 Tehran IRNA in English 0647 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 30, IRNA—Commerce Minister 'Abdol Hoseyn Vahaji returned home from Lebanon Sunday night after inaugurating Iran's fifth exclusive trade fair in Beirut, making preparations for signing a joint economic memorandum and reaching agreements on the opening of Iran's commercial office in Beirut.

Speaking to reporters upon return at the airport, Vahaji said that with the establishment of Iran's commercial office in Beirut by the next month, the necessary services for export of Iranian products to that country will be offered. He added that an agreement was also reached on promoting cooperation between the two countries' chambers of commerce. Talks were also held on resumption of air links and shipping lines between Tehran and Beirut, he said. The minister said products of 110 Iranian manufacturers were displayed in the 12-day exhibition inaugurated last Thursday. Foodstuffs, clothing, handwoven carpets, kitchenware, house appliances, electric appliances and handicrafts were among the items on display.

While in Beirut, Vahaji met with the Lebanese president, ministers of economy, commerce, transportation, industries and finance and discussed bilateral relations.

Defense Minister Views Security Talks in Qatar

LD3012233491 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] On his return from Qatar at noon today, Defense Minister Torkan expounded on the basis of his talks with that country's officials in an interview with our correspondent. Commenting on the neutral stance adopted by Qatar during the imposed war, he said: The Qatari authorities declared that a regional security plan would be impossible without the presence of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The defense minister added: The principle source of growth of the Persian Gulf littoral states is oil, which will lose its present importance in the next two decades. Hence, growth will only be possible once peace and stability prevails over the region, and at

present, the only element of tension is the presence of alien forces. Mr Torkan said: The establishment of security is only made possible by virtue of cooperation among all regional countries.

Our country's defense minister had visited Qatar at the invitation of that country's crown prince and defense minister.

Trade Agreements With Turkmenistan Detailed

LD2912001391 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] To promote trade between Khorasan Province and the Republic of Turkmenistan, beginning today direct telephone links have been established between the customs offices of Khorasan and the Republic of Turkmenistan. We draw your attention to our correspondent's report from Mashhad on the agreements signed on passenger travel between the Islamic Republic of Iran [IRI] and the Republic of Turkmenistan, and the provision of facilities conducive to expanding bilateral economic activities:

[Unidentified correspondent] With the agreement of the IRI and the Republic of Turkmenistan, the border point of Lotfabad-Sarakhs will be inaugurated as the official border to be used for the transit of citizens from the two sides and, economic transactions, on 1 Esfand [20 February 1992] of this year [ending 21 March 1992]. Mr. Mohammadi-Zadeh, the financial, administrative, and planning deputy of Khorasan Governorate, who had accompanied a delegation from the IRI headed by Mr. Va'ezi, the deputy foreign minister in charge of European and U.S. affairs, to Turkmenistan, having announced the above piece of news at a news conference in Mashhad, described the results of the delegation's three-day visit.

He said: To promote economic transactions and on the basis of mutual agreement, a direct telephone link has been established between the customs offices of Khorasan and Turkemenistan, which became operational today. Beginning 12 Farvardin [1 April 1992] 1371 [year beginning 21 March 1992], direct telephone links will also be established between Ashkhabad and Mashhad. He added: In the course of the talks, the two sides reached a general agreement by which the IRI will meet the oil-related needs of the country's northern provinces, through purchasing oil from the Republic of Turkmenistan. In return, the IRI is to sell Turkmenistan's oil-related products to the other countries via the Persian Gulf.

Pointing out that the joint border market on the border district of Bajgiran will become operational early next year, the financial, administrative, and planning deputy of Khorasan governorate stated: To sell the goods manufactured in Khorasan Province and to provide the goods required by that province the Turkmenistan Republic has allocated 10 hectares of land situated by the Qareqom canal in Ashkhabad, to the IRI, as a commercial area, and in view of the proximity of that area to the railway network, airport, and the navigation canal of Qareqom in Ashkhabad, it will be a suitable area for the sale of goods manufactured in Khorasan Province, to the Republic of Turkmenistan, and other neighboring republics. He said: To carry out banking and commercial transactions, the IRI's Central Bank too will open a branch in Ashkhabad, the capital of the Republic of Turkmenistan.

At the end of the interview, Mr. Mohammadi-Zadeh named the export of goods such as flour, sugar, butter, potato, apples, citrus fruit, and powdered milk, from Khorasan to Turkmenistan, in return for the annual purchase of 100,000 tonnes of cotton, and around 200 (?breeding cows) in exchange for [as heard] (?sesame seed) and cement worth $400,000, as among the other agreements reached between the IRI delegation and the Turkmen officials.

Red Crescent To Aid Republic of Nakhichevan

LD2912114891 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] Mr. Bedzham Farzaliyev, prime minister of the Nakhichevan Republic, who is currently in Tehran, has called for assistance from the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Republic of Nakhichevan. He met today with Mr. Vahid Dastjerdi, the director of our country's Red Crescent Society, and described the difficulties faced by his country. He referred to Iran's help to his country as essential.

The director of the Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran announced that that Society is ready to cooperate fully and assist the Nakhichevan Republic, and expressed the hope that the friendly bilateral relations would expand.

Khamene'i, President Deliver Christmas Speeches

LD2912092991 Tehran IRNA in English 1725 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Excerpts] Tehran, Dec. 28, IRNA—The leader of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i on Saturday congratulated all Christians and Muslims of the world on the birth anniversary of prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon Him).

"All those who believe in that great prophet (Jesus—PBUH [peace be upon Him]), Muslims and Christians alike, should follow the path and teachings of the prophets to establish a proper world order and spread human virtues as instructed by those teachers of humanity," the leader said in a message.

He also lashed out at the world's tyrannical powers for their opposition to spirituality and lofty human values which he said has led to the spread of moral corruption, slovenliness, exploitation, breakdown of social justice

and family ties, widening of gap between the poor and rich nations, production of weapons of mass destruction and genocide.

"If Jesus Christ (PBUH) had been among us, he would never have missed even a single moment in fighting oppression and leaders of global arrogance, nor would he have tolerated hunger and perpelexity of billions of people being driven by colonial powers into corruption, war and belligerency," the leader pointed out.

He also expressed hope that with the awakening of human societies and arousing of human conscience, humanity would enter an era of spirituality and religious values and that the world would witness the collapse of all oppressive and arrogant systems similar to the end of Marxism. [passage omitted]

In related news, President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani in his Christmas message today warned that the seemingly affluent countries of the world should know that ignorance of God and divine values plunges mankind into corruption.

The president expressed hope that in the new Christian year the foundations of religion and spirituality would be consolidated so that people can experience true security, comfort and welfare.

BAYAN Comments on Meetings With Montazeri

NC2812144091 Tehran BAYAN in Persian 22 Nov-21 Dec 91 p 8

[Unattributed commentary: "Pretext"]

[Text] The meeting of Majles deputies with Ayatollah Montazeri rapidly turned into a tumultuous political incident and, under the mask of criticism of this political movement, all the forces faithful to the Imam's line, and even some who had and have no commitments to it, became the target of attacks and threats from all sides. This is among the problems which, if not correctly studied and analyzed, may upset the movement of forces which are committed to the imam's line and which consider continuing the revolution to be contingent on it. In this analysis, some points should be noted:

1. There is no doubt that from the point of view of the true followers of the imam's line any movement contrary to his eminence the imam's views, may his soul be sanctified, is deviation, even if it refers to documents and to parts of the imam's remarks. On the basis of his eminence the imam's remarks, may his soul be sanctified, in the same way that rejecting his political plan is not acceptable, so is insulting him.

2. Revolution supporters face a variety of offensives and complicated ploys. We should heed programs propounded by factions which have shown that they spare no effort to disintegrate the faction supporting the imam's line. Exaggerating this incident and even its creation may be a calculated step aimed at opening an arena of deviation in the existing legitimate and useful political struggle. Some aim to deprive the pro-imam faction of popular backing and then to more easily "deal with this faction" both politically and ideologically.

It is no secret that there were processes which were overtly and covertly opposed during the imam's era, as the system moved toward the imam's revolutionary objectives. These processes, which operated as visible and invisible pressure levers and found favorable grounds for further activities after the imam, today feign concern over deviation from the imam's line. By publishing articles, editorials, and statements, they want to capitalize on this meeting which could have been an ordinary meeting similar to others scholars and dignitaries had with Ayatollah Montazeri. They want to use this as a pretext on which to question all the revolutionary activities and stances of the faction which supports the imam's line, and they use a language below a group's dignity or use a cultural-political tribune which claims to direct the public to resort to threats and intimidation. This group should know that those who are faithful to the imam have not forgotten the letters some members sent to him. Commenting on these, the imam said that if we omit their insults, the letters are similar to those from the Liberation Movement. If these people are accusing others of ignoring the deceased imam's hopes, not only are these accusations unworthy of attention but they also place a question mark on the accusers' motives.

3. A brother who was and is one of those who engineered and propagated the current government's economic and political programs and who should, as a rule, not have a considerable political problem with current trends, should not place the faction supporting the imam's line in the Majles in a situation where it can neither protest nor stay silent.

4. Those who speak out of devotion to the imam's line and consider themselves among the current policies' protesters, irrespective of incidents in the few months before the imam's death and irrespective of what can be deduced from these incidents, cannot attach hopes to the stances of those who, in the last few years of the past government's term in office, insisted on adopting those policies that are currently being implemented. A brief study will clarify things for those who are unaware of what these stances were.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Appoints Woman Adviser

LD2812215191 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani has issued a decree appointing Ms. Shahla Habibi as presidential advisor on women's affairs and supervisor of the Office of Women's Affairs.

In his decree, the president expressed hope that the massive group of our country's self-sacrificing and revolutionary women will benefit from the broad outlook of

Islamic societies in order to elevate women's personalities and to attain the true position of Muslim women.

Industry Minister Urges Single Exchange Rate

LD2912001491 Tehran IRNA in English 1626 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 28, IRNA—The government should, at the earliest, resolve the problem of the multiple parity rate of the rial against foreign currencies which has led to the rise of imports to the benefit of foreign companies, heavy industries minister said today.

Hadi Nezhad-Hoseyniyan, who Saturday inspected seven heavy industry units in eastern Tehran, said the current system of multiple parity rates has placed local craftsmen as well as investors in a dilemma.

"The longer the multiple parity rate continues, the more the harm to the industrial sector, and the greater the foreign currency drain from the country, with capital being diverted towards un-economical projects," he warned.

Hoseyniyan thought that the immediate and total replacement of the current system with a single parity rate is certainly preferable to a gradual replacement, and will ultimately result in the industrial prosperity of the country.

During his inspection tour, Hoseyniyan also disclosed that an agreement has been inked with Japan for the purchase of machinery for manufacturing big moulds for heavy duty vehicles.

The machinery will be delivered to Iran as of March 1992, and will help the country produce annually 1,500 tons of heavy duty moulds, he added.

Nepal & Bhutan

Government Recognizes Russian Federation

BK2712143291 Hong Kong AFP in English 1418 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] Kathmandu, Dec 27 (AFP)—Nepal Friday recognised the Russian Federation as a sovereign and independent state, a press release issued by the foreign ministry said.

"Nepal looks forward to maintaining and further developing close ties of friendship and cooperation between Nepal and Russia on the basis of mutual benefit and the United Nations Charter," the press release said.

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, in a separate message to Russian President Boris Yeltsin, conveyed his government's desire to promote and further strengthen relations with Russia through the existing embassies in each other's capitals, the foreign ministry said.

Koirala praised Yeltsin's leadership in ensuring a peaceful transition of power from the former Soviet Union as well as his efforts to introduce democracy and human rights.

King Authorizes Cabinet Reshuffle

BK3012165291 Hong Kong AFP in English 1604 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Kathmandu, Dec 30 (AFP)—King Birendra authorized a reshuffle Monday of Nepal's six-month-old cabinet, replacing six ministers and adding nine new posts, the Royal Palace said in a statement.

The revamping came on the recommendation of Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala as part of an effort to improve Nepal's deteriorating economy and improve law and order, it said.

The new cabinet is to comprise 24 members—10 ministers, seven state ministers and seven assistant ministers.

The prime minister will retain the foreign, defense and royal palace portfolios, the statement said.

Water and Communications Minister Basu Risal and Law and Justice Minister Tara Nath Rana Bhat were replaced by Bijaya Kumar Gachchhadar and Maheshwor Prasad Singh, respectively, it said.

Pakistan

Sharif Welcomes PRC Accord for Nuclear Plant

BK3112143091 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1400 GMT 31 Dec 91

[Text] Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif has welcomed the accord signed between Pakistan and PRC for a 300-megawatt Chinese nuclear power plant for Pakistan. He said this accord reflects the spirit of long-standing friendship and cooperation existing between the two countries. Congratulating the chairmen of the Atomic Energy Commissions of PRC and Pakistan, the prime minister stressed that the nuclear power plant will operate under the safeguards of International Atomic Energy Agency.

Details of Nuclear Program Finalized

BK2412105391 Lahore THE NATION (Islamabad Supplement) in English 22 Dec 91 p 11

[Text] Islamabad—Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission [PAEC] and Chinese Academy of Sciences have decided to draw up an agreement of coperation in the field of peaceful application of nuclear sciences.

The details of the programme of collaboration between the two organisations, are being worked out and will be finalised during the stay of Madame Hu Qiheng, Vice-President of the Chinese Academy of Science, who is on a week's visit to Pakistan at the invitation of the PAEC.

Madame Hu is an eminent scientist with specialisation in the process control, instrumentation and automation.

The Academy of Sciences plays a pivotal role in the development of science and technology in People's Republic of China administring more than 120 research institutions and a university for teaching sciences. The Academy also operates numerous production units and factories where R&D results are implemented. The Academy was set up immediately after the Chinese revolution showing importance given to science and technology by the political leadership of the country.

During her stay here, Madame Hu will visit Pakistan Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology and various PAEC establishments, Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan Academy of Sciences, University Grants Commission and different organisations of the Ministry of Science and Technology. She will also pay a visit to Karachi Nuclear Power Plant.

PRC Delegation Meets Technology Minister

BK2412103891 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] Elahi Bux Soomro, the federal minister for science and technology, has stressed the need for finding new avenues of cooperation between Pakistan and China in the field of science and technology for the mutual benefit of the people of the two countries. He was talking to a Chinese delegation led by Madame Hu Qiheng, the vice chairperson of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, in Islamabad yesterday. The Chinese delegation leader said she has been very pleased with the progress made by Pakistan in every sphere, especially in the field of science and technology.

PRC Groups Meet Governor, Military Officials

BK2312164091 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] A seven-member Chinese judicial delegation headed by Zhu Mingshan called on the Punjab governor, Mian Mohammad Azhar, in Lahore today. Welcoming the delegation, the governor thanked China for its wholehearted support on all international matters and assistance in economic field. The leader of the delegation hoped their visit would help improve judicial system in the two countries.

Another Chinese delegation headed by Mr. (Wang Liansheng) had separate meetings with chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Shamim Alam Khan and Chief of Army Staff General Asif Nawaz in Rawalpindi today. They discussed matters of common interest.

Meeting To Promote Nuclear-Free Region Urged

BK2712163691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] Efforts are being made to convene a five-nation conference early next year to rid the South Asian region of the nuclear weapons. The secretary general of foreign affairs, Mr. Akram Zaki, speaking at Meet the Press program in Karachi this evening said that the first round of talks would be held in Washington. The conference would be participated, besides Pakistan and India, by the United States, China, and the Russian Federation, which is the successor state of the former Soviet Union.

Mr. Akram Zaki said that steps are also being contemplated to cleanse South Asia of all types of lethal weapons and the first high-level talks between Pakistan and India to control the chemical weapons would also be held soon. He reiterated that Pakistan's nuclear program is purely peaceful. He also said that a summit meeting of Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey would be held in February next to further promote multilateral relations between them. He said that the present government wants to promote contacts with all the countries of the world.

To a question about the Chinese prime minister's recent visit to India, he said that China is the best friend of Pakistan and we believe that its growing influence in the region would (?boost) the cause of peace. He said Pakistan welcomes easing of tension between India and China.

Five More Soviet Republics Recognized

BK3112155691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 31 Dec 91

[Text] Pakistan has recognized five more of the Soviet Union's republics—Ukraine, Belarus, Armenia, Moldava, and Georgia. Congratulating these republics on their independence, Pakistan has expressed the desire to promote friendly bilateral relations with them. An official announcement in Islamabad says Pakistan will also make efforts to enhance bilateral cooperation with these republics in political, economic, commercial, and cultural fields.

Pakistan has already recognized Azerbaijan, the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan.

Akram Zaki Says Tashkent Mission To Open Soon

BK2812143491 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1400 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Addressing businessmen at the Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industries in Karachi today, Mohammad Akram Zaki, the secretary general for foreign affairs, said Pakistan will open its mission in Tashkent soon to promote trade and economic relations with Central Asian Muslim republics. He said a department of economic relations has been set up at the Foreign Ministry and a three-year program has been formulated to upgrade Pakistan's missions abroad to improve commercial and economic ties with various countries.

Commentary Views USSR Demise, New Republics

BK2712125291 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 26 Dec 91

[By A.B.S. Jafri]

[Text] The curtain came down on the Soviet Union yesterday, when late in the evening Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, the last president of the second superpower, laid down the reins of his high office. This is an event of so powerful significance. It will take the world some time to gauge the full implications of what has happened in what was the gigantic Soviet Union, the home of socialist power. What is already clear, however, is that a great political and military entity has ceased to be. What is clear (?one has) to see is that the late Soviet Union leaves behind a number of independent states, some of whom have formed, what they describe, as the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS].

It would be premature to draw parallels between the CIS, as the new grouping is going to be called, and the Commonwealth of Nations, a successor to the mighty British empire, or even the European Community, which embraces West European democracies. The CIS, at the moment, has fully sovereign states. They stand at a watershed of the history. They are part of the same state, and that state was run under a centralized system. These successors to the Soviet state have, to start with, to institute fundamental changes in the state structure, going for Western-style democracy and market economy, which is another name for capitalism with minimum state control, if any state control at all. How the states, released into free statehood to which they were not used, would shape, is of course impossible to predict or foresee.

The Soviet Union has passed into history as so many great human enterprises have in the past centuries. But in the perspective of history, this was not an unusual development, nor necessarily one to be regretted. The theory of inevitability of change in human affairs renders change acceptable. In this case, it has to be noted and appreciated that the Soviet Union has left the world a distinctively improved place than what it was when it came into existence some 70 years ago. The Soviet Union has (?sealed) a new extension of the cause of imperialism. In this absolutely solitary development, socialist faith and Soviet Union as its operative instrument played a very healthy and decisive role. The Soviet Union in its early years symbolized the hope of exploited billions of human beings. It glittered as the dream of salvation for the deprived, robbed, humiliated human beings in the yoke of exploitative and cruel political systems. In the period following the end of the Second World War, the Soviet Union influenced the world affairs as a formidable force to the reassertion of prewar imperialist tendencies. Whatever the flaws it might have developed in its domestic affairs, until the last moment the Soviet Union played a transcending and vital role as the balancing factor in the power structure of the world. Already there are apprehensions that with the balancing and corrective effect of the Soviet Union gone, the traditional big powers may be tempted to mold the world entirely to their advantage. These views may be exaggerated at the moment because we must not underestimate the political weight and force of the combination of state that emerges from the ashes of the late Soviet Union.

In Pakistan, we have seen and experienced an encouraging introduction to the new order replacing the Soviet Union. The vice president of the new Russian Federation, the largest state of the former Soviet Union, has already paid a very fruitful visit to Pakistan. The president of Pakistan has been invited to pay a state visit to Moscow. The Russian Federation has offered to conclude a number of bilateral agreements with Pakistan in the fields of trade, commerce, and culture. Some of these agreements may be signed early in the new year. With the newly born sovereign states in Central Asia, comes into the comity of nations a significant element of Muslim states with historical links and affinities, as far as Pakistan is concerned. It is to be hoped that the successors to the Soviet Union would realize that they have a very big responsibility to maintain—political equilibrium in the post-Soviet Union world.

Spokesman Says Sharif To Visit France in Jan

BK2612114091 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] It has been officially announced in Islamabad that the prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, will pay an official visit to France around the middle of next month. A Foreign Office spokesman said today that the decision was taken during talks between the visiting secretary general of the French Foreign Office, Mr. Francois Seiur and Pakistani officials last week.

Replying to a question, he said the two sides exchanged views on bilateral relations and matters which would come up for discussion during the prime minister's visit to France.

Sharif Urges Dialogue With India on Kashmir

BK2812090991 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] The Pakistan prime minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, says New Delhi and Islamabad should start a dialogue at the political level to sort out bilateral problems. In an interview to the editor of a noted Indian English daily in Lahore, he said the spadework of the dialogue should be at the nonofficial level. Describing Kashmir as the core issue, Mr. Nawaz Sharif claimed that his country is not abetting terrorism. He agreed on the need to improve bilateral trade, investment, and cultural ties, but added a proper climate has to be created for the purpose.

Sharif Notes 'Overwhelming Victory' in Elections

BK2912160491 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif says that the overwhelming victory of the Pakistan Muslim League-supported candidates in the Punjab local body elections is yet another and complete expression of the people's support for the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad [IJI] and its policies. Expressing his happiness and satisfaction over the overwhelming victory of the Pakistan Muslim League-supported candidates, the prime minister says this unprecedented success is the manifestation of the people's categorical support—twice within the short span of one year—for the party which believes in making Pakistan a truly Islamic democratic welfare state. The prime minister adds that the victory is the people's verdict in favor of political stability and economic policies and the IJI government is working tirelessly to achieve these two objectives. He says this augurs well for democracy and democratic institutions in the country. This, he adds, reflects the political awareness of Pakistani voters, who cannot be misled by sloganeering and hollow promises.

Nawaz Sharif calls on the newly elected councillors to be fully ready to implement development projects in their respective areas and rededicate themselves to the service and welfare of the people. The prime minister says that the performance of the councillors will be assessed not by their programs but by their services to the people and their respective areas. He affirms that the newly elected local councillors will fill the expectations of the people.

Sindh Police Launch New Operation in Province

BK2912164291 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] The Sindh police have launched an operation to bring improvement in the law and order situation in the interior of the province. This was stated by the inspector general [IG] of police of Sindh at a news conference in Karachi today. He said anti-dacoit [bandit] operation launched in December last year had produced desired results. A new strategy was evolved by the Sindh chief minister, Jam Sadiq Ali, and his adviser, Mr. Irfanullah Khan Marwat, concerning the operation. The experiences gained in the operation were analyzed and the new operation has been launched with a new strategy to improve the situation in the interior of Sindh as was done in the urban areas of the province. The IG of police also mentioned the introduction of river police which have been equipped with bulletproof boats capable of moving in shallow water.

Answering a question about Al-Zulfiqar Organization, the Sindh police chief said all major operations launched by it were detected and the culprits apprehended. In this regard, he referred to cases of murders of Malik Ehsan, late Nabi Sher Junejo, and bomb blasts in the city.

Sri Lanka

Russian Federation Recognized as USSR Successor

BK2812135291 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1323 GMT 28 Dec 91

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, Dec 28 (LANKAPUVATH)—Sri Lanka has recognized the Russian Federation as successor to the former USSR. President Ranasinghe Premadasa in a message to Boris Yeltsin, president of the Russian Federation states, "I have followed with keen interest the recent events in the Soviet Union. I warmly welcome the peaceful evolution that has taken place there leading to the fulfilment of the national aspirations of the constituent states of the union. The people and government of Sri Lanka join me in warmly welcoming the Russian Federation into the community of nations and as the successor state to the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Sri Lanka wishes to reaffirm its keen desire to further strengthen the warm ties that bind our two countries. I also wish to extend my fullest cooperation to you in the exercise of the heavy responsibilities you have now undertaken. Please accept, Excellency, my best wishes for your personal well-being and continued success in the tasks which lie ahead of you."

Muslims Thank Government for UN Vote on Israel

BK2512114491 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Text] The Sri Lanka Muslim Congress extends to the government of Sri Lanka its heart-felt appreciation for voting against the resolution sponsored by the United States of America to repeal a 1975 United Nations resolution which denounced Zionism as a form of racism and racial discrimination. The Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, in a statement, points out that the stand taken by the government at the United Nations is a clear manifestation and a reaffirmation of its commitment toward the Palestinian cause.